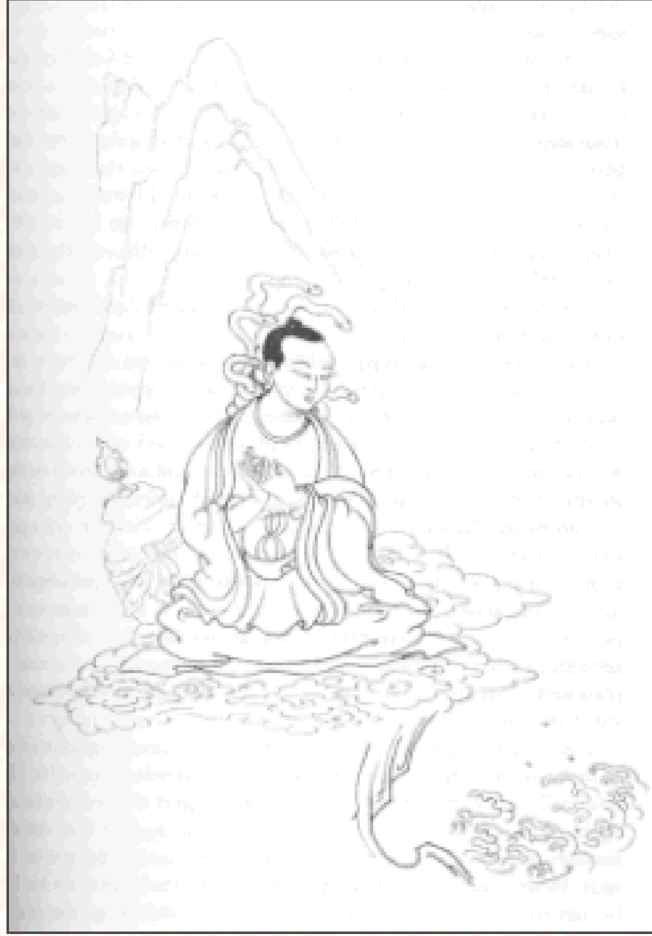
Verses from the Centre



Verses from the Centre

Contents

Sanskrit: *Mula madhyamaka karika.*

Tibetan: *dBu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba.*

by Nagarjuna

Romanization and Literal English Translation

of the Tibetan Text

by

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April 2000

Preface

This document contains the romanized Tibetan text of Nagarjuna's *Mulamadhyamakakarika* together with a literal English translation. Two Tibetan texts were consulted: the versions found in (1) The Asian Classics Input Project, Woodblock to Laser Source CD, Release A,Produced under the direction of Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin, Washington DC, 1993, and(2) *Dbuma Rigs Tshogs Drug: The Six Yukt Shastra of Madhyamika (pp. 1-37)*, edited by Prof. L.P. Lhalungpa. Delhi: 1970. The version here relies on both sources as well as the text embedded in the prose of Tsongkhapa's *An Ocean of Reason: A Great Exposition of the Root Text* Verses from the Center (*rTsa she tik chen rigs pa'i rgya mtsho*). Varanasi: mTho slob dge ldan spyi las khang, 1973.

Each Tibetan verse is followed by a literal English translation. This translation served as the first draft for the free poetic version published in Stephen Batchelor. *Verses from the Center: A Buddhist Vision of the Sublime*. New York: Riverhead Books, 2000.

In making the English translation, the primary authority was Tsongkhapa's fourteenth century commentary: *An Ocean of Reason: A Great Exposition of the Root Text* Verses from the Center.

The following translations from Sanskrit were also consulted:

Inada, Kenneth K. *Nagarjuna: A Translation of his* Mulamadhyamakakarika *with an Introductory Essay*. Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1970.

Kalupahana, David J. *Nagarjuna: The Philosophy of the Middle Way*. Albany: SUNY, 1986.

Streng, Frederick. *Emptiness -- A Study in Religious Meaning*. Nashville, New York: Abingdon, 1967.

As was the following translation from the Tibetan:

Garfield, Jay L. *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nagarjuna's* Mulamadhyamakakarika. New York / Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Any mistakes are my own.

Stephen Batchelor

Sharpham College

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Abbreviations

In the comments that follow some of the verses, the abbreviations refer to the works below. The number after the abbreviation refers to the page number of the editions cited.

Lha. *Dbuma Rigs Tshogs Drug: The Six Yukt Shastra of Madhyamika (pp. 1-37),* edited by Prof. L.P. Lhalungpa. Delhi: 1970.

Ts. Tsongkhapa. *An Ocean of Reason: A Great Exposition of the Root Text* Verses from the Center (*rTsa she tik chen rigs pa'i rgya mtsho*). Varanasi: mTho slob dge ldan spyi las khang, 1973.

K. Kalupahana, David J. *Nagarjuna: The Philosophy of the Middle Way*. Albany: SUNY, 1986.

The title given in brackets below the title at the head of each chapter is the name of the poem found in *Verses from the Center: A Buddhist Vision of the Sublime.*

Contents

Tsongkhapa on Nagarjuna

[Translator’s homage]

dBu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa Shes rab ces bya ba bzhugs so // //

rgya gar skad du // Pra dzny'a n'a ma m'u la ma dhy'a ma ka k'a ri ka

bod skad du //'jam dpal gzhon nur gyur pa la phyag 'tshal lo

Herein lie the Root Verses of the Center called “Intelligence”. In the language of India: *Prajnanamamulamadhyamakakarika***. In the language of Tibet:** *dBu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba.* **I prostrate to the youthful Manjushri.**

[Nagarjuna’s homage]

/gang gis rten cing ‘brel par ‘byung//’gag pa med pa skye med pa//chad pa med pa rtag med pa//’ong pa med pa ‘gro med pa//tha dad don min don gcig min//spros pa nyer zhi zhi bstan pa//rdzogs pa’i sangs rgyas smra rnams kyi//dam pa de la phyag ‘tsal lo/

I bow down to the most sublime of speakers, the completely awakened one who taught contingency (no cessation, no birth, no annihilation, no permanence, no coming, no going, no difference, no identity) to ease fixations.

1. Investigation of Conditions

(Conditions)

1. */bdag las ma yin gzhan las min//gnyis las ma yin rgyu med min//dngos po gang dag gang na yang// skye ba nam yang yod ma yin/*

1. No thing anywhere is ever born from itself, from something else, from both or without a cause.

2. */ rkyen rnams bzhi ste rgyu dang ni//dmigs pa dang ni de ma thag//bdag po yang ni de bzhin te//rkyen lnga pa ni yod ma yin/*

2. **There are four conditions:Causes, objects, immediate and dominant. There is no fifth.**

3. */dngos po rnams kyi rang bzhin ni//rkyen la sogs pa yod ma yin//bdag gi dngos po yod min na//gzhan dngos yod pa ma yin no/*

3. The essence of things does not exist in conditions and so on. If an own thing does not exist, an other thing does not exist.

4. */bya ba rkyen dang ldan pa med//rkyen dang mi ldan bya ba med//bya ba mi ldan rkyen ma yin//bya ba ldan yod ‘on te na/*

4. There is no activity which has conditions. There is no activity which does not have conditions. There are no conditions which do not have activity, and none which do have activity.

5. */'di dag la brtan skye bas na//de phyir 'di dag rkyen ces grag//ci srid mi skye de srid du//'di dag rkyen min ci ltar min/*

5. Since something is born in dependence upon them, then they are known as "conditions". As long as it is not born, why are they not non-conditions?

6. */med dam yod pa'i don la yang//rkyen ni rung ba ma yin te//med na gang gi rkyen du 'gyur//yod na rkyen gyis ci zhig bya/*

6. It is impossible for something that either exists or not to have conditions. If it were non-existent, of what would they be the conditions? If it were existent, why would it need conditions?

7. */gang tshe chos ni yod pa dang//med dang yod med mi 'grub pas//ci ltar sgrub byed rgyu zhes bya//de ltar yin na mi rigs so/*

7. When things cannot be established as either existent, non-existent or both, how can one speak of an "establishing cause." Such would be impossible.

8. */yod pa'i chos 'di dmigs pa ni//med pa kho na nye bar bstan//ci ste chos ni dmigs med na//dmigs pa yod par ga la 'gyur/*

8. An existent phenomenon is clearly said to have no object at all. If the phenomenon has no object, where can the object exist?

9. */chos rnams skyes pa ma yin na//'gag pa 'thad par mi 'gyur ro//de phyir de ma thag mi rigs//'gags na rkyen yang gang zhig yin/*

9. If phenomena are not born, it is invalid for there to be cessation. Therefore, an immediate [condition] is unreasonable. What, having ceased, can also be a condition?

10. */dngos po rang bzhin med rnams kyi//yod pa gang phyir yod min na//'di yod pas na 'di 'byung zhes// bya ba 'di ni 'thad ma yin/*

10. Because the existence of essence-less things does not exist, it is incorrect to say:"When this exists, that arises."

11. */rkyen rnams so so 'dus pa la//'bras bu de ni med pa nyid//rkyen rnams la ni gang med pa//de ni rkyen las ci ltar skye/*

11. There is no effect at all in the conditions individually or together**. How can that which is not in the conditions itself be born from conditions?**

12. */ci ste 'bras bu de med kyang//rkyen de dag las skye 'gyur na//rkyen min las kyang 'bras bu ni//ci yi phyir na skye mi 'gyur/*

12. If, although the effect is not there, it is born from those conditions, why is an effect not born from what are not its conditions?

13. */'bras bu rkyen gyi rang bzhin ni//rkyen rnams bdag gi rang bzhin min//bdag dngos min las 'bras bu gang//de ni ci ltar rkyen rang bzhin/*

13. Effects [are of] the nature of conditions. Conditions do not have own nature. How can those effects of what does not have own nature [be of] the nature of conditions?

14. */de phyir rkyen gyi rang bzhin min//rkyen min rang bzhin 'bras bu ni//yod min 'bras bu med bas na// rkyen min rkyen du ga la 'gyur/*

14. Therefore, [it does] not have the nature of conditions, nor is there an effect with the nature of non-conditions. Since there is no effect, what could [be its] non-conditions or conditions**?**

2. Investigation of Coming and Going

(Walking)

1. */ re zhig song la mi 'gro ste/ /ma song ba la'ang 'gro ba min/ /song dang ma song ma gtogs par/ /bgom pa shes par mi 'gyur ro/*

1. Then there is no going in what has gone; there is no going also in what has not [yet] gone. Motion is unknowable apart from what has gone and not [yet] gone.

2. */gang na g.yo ba de na 'gro/ /de yang gang phyir bgom pa la/ /g.yo ba song min ma song min/ /de phyir bgom la 'gro ba yod/*

2. Where there is moving, there there is going. Furthermore, because moving is within

motion -- and is neither gone nor not [yet] gone, therefore, there is going within motion.

3. */bgom la 'gro ba yin par ni/ /ji lta bur na 'thad par 'gyur/ /gang tshe 'gro ba med pa yi/ /bgom pa 'thad pa med phyir ro/*

3. How can going be possible within motion? Because motion that is not going is impossible.

4. */gang gi bgom pa la 'gro ba/ /de yi bgom la 'gro med par/ /thal bar 'gyur te gang gi phyir/ /bgom la 'gro ba yin phyir ro/*

4. For whomever there is going within motion, for him it will follow that there [could be] no going within motion, because there is going within motion.

Or, following the structure and wording of v. 10: “To claim that there is going within motion implies that there could be no going within motion, because it is asserted there is going within motion.”

5. */bgom la 'gro ba yod na ni/ /'gro ba gnyis su thal 'gyur te/ /gang gis de bgom gyur ba dang/ /de la 'gro ba gang yin pa'o/*

5. If there were going within motion, it would follow that going would be twofold: that by which one becomes someone in motion [in a place] and [that by which one] goes in that [place].

6. */'gro ba gnyis su thal 'gyur na/ /'gro ba po yang gnyis su 'gyur/ /gang phyir 'gro po med par ni/ /'gro ba 'thad par mi 'gyur phyir/*

6. If going were twofold, the goer also would be twofold, because going is impossible without a goer.

7. */gal te 'gro po med gyur na/ /'gro ba 'thad par mi 'gyur te/ /'gro ba med na 'gro ba po/ /yod pa nyid du ga la 'gyur/*

7. If there were no goer, going would be impossible. If there were no going, where could a goer be existent?

8. */re zhig 'gro po mi 'gro ste/ /'gro ba po min 'gro ba min/ /'gro po 'gro po min las gzhan/ /gsum pa gang zhig 'gro bar 'gyur/*

8. When a goer does not go, a non-goer cannot go; what third one other than a goer and a non-

goer could go? [cf. v. 15]

9. */gang tshe 'gro ba med par ni/ /'gro ba 'thad par mi 'gyur na/ /re zhig 'gro po 'gro'o zhes/ /ji ltar 'thad pa nyid du 'gyur/*

9. When a goer* is impossible without going, then how is it possible to say: "a goer goes"?

*** *'gro ba*:** Ts. 102 glosses this as '*gro ba po* = 'goer' which makes more sense and agrees with K. 123. Could this be a textual corruption? l.2 would read better as: '*gro po thad par mi 'gyur na*.

10. */gang gi phyogs la 'gro ba po/ /'gro ba de la 'gro med pa'i/ /'gro po yin par thal 'gyur te/ /'gro po 'gro bar 'dod phyir ro/*

10. To claim that a goer goes implies that there could be a goer who does not go, because it is asserted that a goer goes. [cf. v. 4]

11. */gal te 'gro po 'gro 'gyur na/ /'gro ba gnyis su thal 'gyur te/ /gang gis 'gro por mngon pa dang/ /'gro por gyur nas gang 'gro ba'o/*

11. If the goer goes, it would follow that going would be twofold: that which reveals* the goer and that which goes once [he] has become a goer.

*Ts. 103 understands *mgon* as *brjod*, i.e. "that which allows someone to be designated as a goer." This agrees with K. 124 (*vyapadesa*).

12. */song la 'gro ba'i rtsom med de/ /ma song ba la'ang 'gro rtsom med/ /bgom la rtsom pa yod min na/ /gang du 'gro ba rtsom par byed/*

12. If a beginning of going does not exist in what has gone, [if] a beginning of going does not exist also in what has not [yet] gone [and if] there does not exist a beginning within motion, wherein is a beginning of going made?

13. */'gro ba rtsom pa'i snga rol na/ /gang du 'gro ba rtsom 'gyur ba'i/ /bgom pa med cing song ba med/ /ma song 'gro ba ga la yod/*

13. Before a beginning of going, there is not any motion or anything which has gone wherein going could begin. How can going exist in what has not [yet] gone?

14. */'gro rtsom rnam pa thams cad du/ /snang ba med pa nyid yin na/ /song ba ci zhig bgom pa ci/ /ma song ci zhig rnam par brtag/*

14. If a beginning of going is simply not apparent in any way, examine: what has gone? what

is motion? what has not [yet] gone?

15. */re zhig 'gro po mi sdod de/ /'gro ba po min sdod pa min/ /'gro po 'gro po min las gzhan/ /gsum pa gang zhig sdod par 'gyur/*

15. When a goer does not stay, a non-goer cannot stay; what third one other than a goer and a non-goer could stay? [cf. v. 8]

16. */gang tshe 'gro ba med par ni/ /'gro po 'thad par mi 'gyur na/ /re zhig 'gro po sdod do zhes/ /ji ltar 'thad pa nyid du 'gyur/*

16. When a goer is not possible without going, how then is it possible [to say]: "a goer stays."

17. */bgom las ldog par mi 'gyur te/ /song dang ma song las kyang min/ /'gro ba dang ni 'jug pa dang/ /ldog pa yang ni 'gro dang mtshungs/*

17. There is no reversal of motion*, nor also of what has gone [and] what has not [yet] gone. [Reversal of] going, engagement [to stay] and reversal [of staying] are similar to going.

* Ts. 105 connects the "reversal of motion" with the "starting to stay". Skt. seems explicitly to mention "staying". In the following line, Ts. explains that there is no reversal of motion in either what has gone or not yet gone because both are devoid of going. "Reversal of motion" seems to mean simply "stopping." Ts's comm. on l c-d is difficult to trace, suggesting that he may be following a different version of the root text. My rendition of c-d is tentative. K. 127 has: "Movement, commencement and cessation (of movement) are all comparable to motion."

18. */'gro ba de dang 'gro ba po/ /de nyid ces kyang byar mi rung/ /'gro ba dang ni 'gro ba po/ /gzhan nyid ces kyang byar mi rung/*

18. It is inappropriate to say: "going and a goer are the same." It is inappropriate to say: "going and a goer are different."

19. */gal te 'gro ba gang yin pa/ /de nyid 'gro po yin gyur na/ /byed pa po dang las nyid kyang/ /gcig pa nyid du thal bar 'gyur/*

19. If whatever is going were a goer, it would follow that the actor and the act would be the same too.

20. */gal te 'gro dang 'gro ba po/ /gzhan pa nyid du rnam brtag na/ /'gro po med pa'i 'gro ba dang/ /'gro ba med pa'i 'gro por 'gyur/*

20. If going and a goer were conceived as different, there could be going without a goer and a

goer without going.

21. */gang dag dngos po gcig pa dang/ /dngos po gzhan pa nyid du ni/ /grub par gyur pa yod min na/ /de gnyis grub pa ji ltar yod/*

21. If things are not established as the same and as different, how can they be established?

22. */'gro ba gang gis 'gro por mngon/ /'gro ba de ni de 'gro min/ /gang phyir 'gro ba'i snga rol med/ / gang zhig gang du 'gro bar 'gyur/*

22. That very going by which a goer is made evident does not [enable a goer to] go. Because there is no [goer] before going, who would be going where?

23. */'gro ba gang gis 'gro por mngon/ /de las gzhan pa de 'gro min/ /gang phyir 'gro po gcig pu la/ /'gro ba gnyis su mi 'thad do/*

23. [A going] which is other than the going by which a goer is made evident does not [enable a goer to] go. Because it is impossible for going to be twofold within a single goer.

24. */'gro po yin par gyur pa ni/ /'gro rnam gsum du 'gro mi byed/ /ma yin par ni gyur de yang/ /'gro rnam gsum du 'gro mi byed/*

24. One who is a goer does not go in the three aspects of going. Also one who is not [a goer] does not go in the three aspects of going.

25. */yin dang ma yin gyur pa yang/ /'gro rnam gsum du 'gro mi byed/ /de phyir 'gro dang 'gro po dang/ / bgrod par bya ba'ang yod ma yin/*

25. One who is and is not [a goer] also does not go in the three aspects of going. Therefore, going and a goer and also that which is gone over do not exist.

'gro ba dang 'ong ba brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa gnyis pa'o/////

3. Investigation of the Sense Organs

(Seeing)

1. */lta dang nyan dang snom pa dang/ /myong bar byed dang reg byed yid/ /dbang po drug ste de dag gi/ /spyod yul blta bar bya la sogs/*

1. Seeing and hearing and smelling and tasting and touching, mind are the six sense organs; their experienced objects are what-is-seen and so forth.

2. */lta de rang gi bdag nyid ni/ /de la lta ba ma yin nyid/ /gang zhig bdag la mi lta ba/ /de dag gzhan* la ji ltar lta/*

[Lha. **de bzhin bdag*]

2. Seeing does not see itself. How can what does not see itself see anything else?

3. */lta ba rab tu bsgrub pa'i phyir/ /me yi dpes ni nus ma yin/ /song dang ma song bgom pa yis/ /de ni lta bcas lan btab bo/*

3. The example of fire is not able to fully establish seeing. It, along with seeing, has been refuted by "gone", "not gone" and "going."

4. */gang tshe cung zad mi lta bar/ /lta bar byed pa ma yin no/ /blta bas lta bar byed ces byar/ /de ni ji ltar rigs par 'gyur/*

4. When not seeing the slightest thing, there is no act of seeing. How can it [then] be reasonable to say: "seeing sees"?

5. */lta ba lta nyid ma yin te/ /lta ba min pa mi lta nyid/ /lta ba nyid kyis lta ba po'ang/ /rnam par bshad par shes par bya/*

5. Seeing does not see; non-seeing does not see. It should be understood that seeing explains the seer too.

6. */ma spang lta po yod min te/ /lta ba spangs par gyur kyang ngo/ /lta po med na blta bya dang/ /lta ba de dag ga la yod/*

6. Without letting go of [seeing] a seer does not exist; in letting go of seeing, there is also [no seer]. If there is no seer, where can there be what-is-seen and seeing?

7. */ci ltar pha dang ma dag las/ /brten nas bu ni 'byung bar bshad/ /de bzhin mig dang gzugs brten nas/ / rnam par shes pa 'byung bar bshad/*

7. Just as it is said that a child emerges in dependence on a father and a mother, likewise it is said that consciousness emerges in dependence upon an eye and a visual form.

8. */blta bya lta ba med pa'i phyir/ /rnam par shes la sogs pa bzhi/ /yod min nye bar len la sogs/ /ji lta bur na yod par 'gyur/*

8. Because there is no what-is-seen and no seeing, the four such as consciousness do not exist. How can clinging etc. exist?

9. */lta bas nyan dang snom pa dang/ /myong bar byed dang reg byed yid/ /nyan pa po dang mnyan la sogs/ /rnam par bshad par shes par bya/*

9. It should be understood that seeing explains hearing and smelling and tasting and touching, mind, hearer, what is heard, etc.

dbang po brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa gsum pa'o////

4. Investigation of the Aggregates

(Body)

1. */gzugs kyi rgyu ni ma gtogs par/ /gzugs ni dmigs par mi 'gyur ro/ /gzugs zhes bya ba ma gtogs par/ / gzugs kyi rgyu yang mi snang ngo/*

1. Apart from the cause of form, form is not perceived. Apart from "form", the cause of form also does not appear.

[Ts. 128 gives "the eye etc."as examples of "form" and "the four elements" as examples of the "causes of form."]

2. */gzugs kyi rgyu ni ma gtogs par/ /gzugs na gzugs ni rgyu med par/ /thal bar gyur te don gang yang/ / rgyu med pa ni gang na'ang med/*

2. If there were form apart from the cause of form, it would follow that form is without cause; there is no object at all that is without cause.

3. */gal te gzugs ni ma gtogs par/ /gzugs kyi rgyu zhig yod na ni/ /'bras bu med pa'i rgyur 'gyur te/ /'bras bu med pa'i rgyu med do/*

3. If a cause of form existed apart from form, it would exist as a cause without fruit; causes without fruit do not exist.

4. */gzugs yod na yang gzugs kyi ni/ /rgyu yang 'thad par mi 'gyur nyid/ /gzugs med na yang gzugs kyi ni/ /rgyu yang 'thad par mi 'gyur nyid/*

4. If form existed, a cause of form would be untenable; if form did not exist, a cause of form would be untenable.

5. */rgyu med pa yi gzugs dag ni/ /'thad par mi rung rung min nyid/ /de phyir gzugs kyi rnam par rtog/ /'ga' yang rnam par brtag mi bya/*

5. Forms which do not have a cause are not at all tenable. Therefore, do not conceive the concept of form at all.

[Ts. 129-30 explains "*rung min nyid*" as being an added emphasis. To "not conceive of the concept of form" he regards as unworthy for the yogin who beholds reality. He cites Buddhapalita, who explains how it is "inappropriate," in contrast to "how appropriate it would be to reflect on non-abiding."]

6. */'bras bu rgyu dang 'dra ba zhes/ /bya ba 'thad pa ma yin te/ /'bras bu rgyu dang mi 'dra zhes/ /bya ba'ang 'thad pa ma yin no/*

6. It is untenable to say, "the fruit is like the cause." It is also untenable to say, "the fruit is unlike the cause."

7. */tshor dang 'du shes 'du byed dang/ /sems dang dngos po thams cad kyang/ /rnam pa dag ni thams cad du/ /gzugs nyid kyis ni rim pa mtshungs/*

7. Feeling and perception, impulses and mind and all things are comparable in every aspect, at every stage with form.

8. */stong pa nyid kyis brtsad byas tshe/ /gang zhig lan 'debs smra byed pa/ /de yi thams cad lan btab min/ /bsgrub par bya dang mtshungs par 'gyur/*

8. When having argued by means of emptiness, everything of that one who objects is not an objection; it is similar to what is to be established .

9. */stong pa nyid kyis bshad byas tshe/ /gang zhig skyon 'dogs smra byed pa/ /de yi thams cad skyon btags min/ /bsgrub par bya dang mtshungs par 'gyur/*

9. When having explained by means of emptiness, everything of that one who finds fault is not a fault; it is similar to what is to be established.

phung po brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bzhi pa'o////

5. Investigation of the Elements

(Space)

1. / *nam mkha'i mtshan nyid snga rol na/ /nam mkha' cung zad yod ma yin/ /gal te mtshan las snga gyur na/ /mtshan nyid med par thal bar 'gyur/*

1. Not the slightest bit of space exists prior to the characteristics of space. If [space] existed prior to its characteristics, it would follow that it would be without characteristics.

2. / *mtshan nyid med pa'i dngos po ni/ /'ga' yang gang na'ang yod ma yin/ /mtshan nyid med pa'i dngos med na/ /mtshan nyid gang du 'jug par 'gyur/*

2. A thing without characteristics does not exist anywhere at all. If a thing without characteristics does not exist, to what do characteristics extend?

3. / *mtshan nyid med la mtshan nyid ni/ /mi 'jug mtshan nyid bcas la min/ /mtshan bcas mtshan nyid med pa las/ /gzhan la'ang 'jug par mi 'gyur ro/*

3. Characteristics do not extend to that which has no characteristics; nor to what possesses characteristics. They also cannot extend to something other than what either possesses or does not have characteristics.

4. / *mtshan nyid 'jug pa ma yin na/ /mtshan gzhi 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/ /mtshan gzhi 'thad pa ma yin na/ /mtshan nyid kyang ni yod ma yin/*

4. If characteristics do not extend [to something] , something characterized would be impossible. If something characterized is impossible, characteristics too would not exist.

5. / *de phyir mtshan gzhi yod min te/ /mtshan nyid yod pa nyid ma yin/ /mtshan gzhi mtshan nyid ma gtogs pa'i/ /dngos po yang ni yod ma yin/*

5. Therefore, something characterized does not exist and characteristics do not exist. There also does not exist a thing which is apart from being something characterized or a

characteristic.

6. */ dngos po yod pa ma yin na/ /dngos med gang gi yin par 'gyur/ /dngos dang dngos med mi mthun chos/ /gang gis dngos dang dngos med shes/*

6. If there is not a thing, of what can there be a non-thing? By whom are the opposites thing and non-thing known [as] a thing and a non-thing?

[Ts. 140 understands “a thing” to refer to the obstructive matter of which space, as a negation and hence a non-thing, is a negation of.]

7. */ de phyir nam mkha' dngos po min/ /dngos med ma yin mtshan gzhi min/ /mtshan nyid ma yin khams lnga po/ /gzhan gang dag kyang nam mkha' mtshungs/*

7. Therefore, space is not a thing; it is not a non-thing; it is not something characterized; it is not a characteristic. The other five elements too are similar to space.

8. */ blo chung gang dag dngos rnams la/ /yod pa nyid dang med nyid du/ /blta ba des ni blta bya ba/ /nye bar zhi ba zhi mi mthong/*

8. Those of small minds see things as existent and non-existent. They do not behold the utter pacification of what is seen.

khams brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa lnga pa'o/ /// /

6. Investigation of Desire and the Desirous One

(*Addiction*)

1. */gal te 'dod chags snga rol na//'dod chags med pa'i chags yod na//de la brten nas 'dod chags yod//chags yod 'dod chags yod par 'gyur/*

1. If a desirous one without desire exists before desire, desire would exist dependent on that [desirous one]. [When] a desirous one exists, desire exists.

2. */chags pa yod par 'gyur na'ang*//'dod chags yod par ga la 'gyur//chags pa la yang 'dod chags ni//yod dam med kyang rim pa mtshungs/*

[*Ts. 146 *chags pa yod par ma ‘gyur na* but acknowledges that Buddhapalita & Sherab Dronme

follow the reading above. Ts. 147-9 has a lengthy discussion about the difference between the old and new translations of these verses.]

2. If there were no desirous one, how could there be desire? The same follows for the desirous one too: [it depends on] whether desire exists or not.

3. */'dod chags dang ni chags pa dag//lhan cig nyid du skye mi rigs//'di ltar 'dod chags chags pa dag // phan tshun ltos pa med par 'gyur/*

3. It is not reasonable for desire and the desirous one to arise as co-existent. In this way desire and the desirous one would not be mutually contingent.

4. */gcig nyid lhan cig nyid med de//de nyid de dang lhan cig min//ci ste tha dad nyid yin na//lhan cig nyid du ji ltar 'gyur/*

4. Identity has no co-existence: something cannot be co-existent with itself. If there were difference, how could there be co-existence?

5. */gal te gcig pu lhan cig na//grogs med par yang der 'gyur ro//gal te tha dad lhan cig na//grogs med par yang der 'gyur ro/*

5. If the identical were co-existent, [co-existence] would also occur between the unrelated; if the different were co-existent, [co-existence] would also occur between the unrelated.

[*grogs med par* is translated by K, G [and Gnoli] as "without association". The Tibetan literally means "without assistance". *Grogs pa* is the defining characteristic of *rkyen* (condition), i.e. it implies a functional relationship, usually causal; it is what helps something become what it is.]

6. */gal te tha dad lhan cig na//ci go 'dod chags chags pa dag //tha dad nyid du grub 'gyur ram//des na de gnyis lhan cig 'gyur/*

6. If the different were co-existent, how would desire and the desirous one be established as different or, if that were so, [how would] those two be co-existent?

[this verse seems to say no more than v.7 below, but says it less neatly]

7. */gal te 'dod chags chags pa dag//tha dad nyid du grub gyur na//de dag lhan cig nyid du ni//ci yi phyir na yongs su rtog/*

7. If desire and the desirous were established as different, because of what could one

understand them as co-existent?

8. */tha dad grub par ma gyur pas//de phyir lhan cig 'dod byed na//lhan cig rab tu grub pa'i phyir//tha dad nyid du yang 'dod dam/*

8. If one asserts them to be co-existent because they are not established as different, then because they would be very much established as co-existent, would one not also have to assert them to be different?

9. */tha dad dngos po ma grub pas//lhan cig dngos po 'grub mi 'gyur//tha dad dngos po gang yod na//lhan cig dngos por 'dod par byed/*

9. Since different things are not established, co-existent things are not established. If there existed any different things, one could assert them as co-existent things.

10. */de ltar 'dod chags chags pa dag//lhan cig lhan cig min mi 'grub//'dod chags bzhin du chos rnams kun//lhan cig lhan cig min mi 'grub/*

10. In that way, desire and the desirous one are not established as co-existent or not co-existent. Like desire, all phenomena are not established as co-existent or not co-existent.

[Ts. 153 explains "all phenomena" to refer to hatred and the hater, stupidity and the confused one, and proceeds to reconstruct v.1 substituting "hatred" for "desire" etc.]

'dod chags dang chags pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa drug pa'o //

7. Investigation of Birth, Abiding and Perishing

[Skt. title is "investigation of the compounded - *samskrta*"]

(Birth)

1. */gal te skye ba 'dus byas na/ /de la mtshan nyid gsum ldan 'gyur/ /ci ste skye ba 'dus ma byas/ /ji ltar 'dus byas mtshan nyid yin/*

1. If birth were compounded, it would possess the three characteristics [of a compound]. If birth were uncompounded, how would it be a characteristic of a compound?

2. */skye la sogs gsum so so yis/ /'dus byas mtshan nyid bya bar ni/ /nus min gcig la dus gcig tu/ /'dus pa yang ni ji ltar rung/*

2. The three such as birth cannot individually be that which characterises compounds. How is it possible for one at one time to be compounded [of all three]?

3. */skye dang gnas dang 'jig rnams la/ /'dus byas mtshan nyid gzhan zhig ni/ /gal te yod na thug med 'gyur/ /med na de dag 'dus byas min/*

3. If birth, abiding and perishing had an other characteristic of being compounded, this would be endless. If not, they would not be compounded.

4. */skye ba'i skye bas rtsa ba yi/ /skye ba 'ba' zhig skyed par byed/ /rtsa ba'i skye bas skye ba yi/ /skye ba'ang skyed par byed pa yin/*

4. The birth of birth gives birth to the root birth alone. The root birth also is that which gives birth to the birth of birth.

5. */gal te khyod kyi skye ba'i skyes/ /rtsa ba'i skye ba skyed byed na/ /khyod kyi rtsa bas ma bskyed des/ /de ni ji ltar skyed par byed/*

5. If your birth of birth gives birth to the root birth, how does that which is not yet born from your root give birth to that [root birth]?

6. */gal te khyod kyi rtsa ba yis/ /bskyed pa de yis rtsa skyed na/ /des ma bskyed pa'i rtsa ba des/ /de ni ji ltar skyed par byed/*

6. If that which is born from your root birth gives birth to the root, how does that root which is born from that give birth to that [from which it is born]?

7. */gal te ma skyes pa de yis/ /de skyed pa ni byed nus na/ /khyod kyi skye bzhin pa de yis/ /de skyed par ni 'dod la rag/*

7. If that which has not been born is able to give birth to that, that of yours which is being born should be able to give birth to that.

[v. 4-7: This is a clear example of another hand interfering with the text. Not only is it incapable of being reset as poetry, it is incompatible with the style of the verses that precede and especially those that follow. Also cf. MMK 1: 7-9]

8. */ji ltar mar me rang dang gzhan/ /snang bar byed pa de bzhin du/ /skye ba'ang rang dang gzhan gyi*

dngos/ /gnyis ka skyed par byed pa yin/

8. Just as lamplight illuminates itself and others, likewise birth too gives birth to both itself and the thing of others.

[“itself and the thing of others” is the clumsy Tibetan form of *svaparaatma, cf. svabhava / parabhava.*]

9. */mar me dang ni gang dag na/ /de 'dug pa na mun pa med/ /mar mes ci zhig snang bar byed/ /mun pa sel bas snang byed yin/*

9. Wherever lamplight is present there is no darkness. What does lamplight illuminate? It illuminates by dispelling darkness.

10. */gang tshe mar me skye bzhin pa/ /mun pa dang ni phrad med na/ /ji ltar mar me skye bzhin pas/ / mun pa sel bar byed pa yin/*

10. If, when lamplight is being generated, it does not encounter darkness, how does the generation of lamplight dispel darkness?

11. */mar me phrad pa med par yang/ /gal te mun pa sel byed na/ /'jig rten kun na gnas pa'i mun/ /'di na gnas pa des sel 'gyur/*

11. If darkness is dispelled even though it does not encounter lamplight, this [lamplight] dwelling here would eliminate the darkness that dwells in all the worlds.

12. */mar me* rang dang gzhan gyi dngos/ /gal te snang bar byed 'gyur na/ /mun pa'ang rang dang gzhan gyi dngos/ /sgrib par 'gyur bar the tshom med/*

[Ts. **mes*]

12. If lamplight illuminated itself and the thing of others, darkness too would without doubt obscure itself and the thing of others.

13. */skye ba 'di ni ma skyes pas/ /rang gi bdag nyid ji ltar skyed/ /ci ste skyes pas skyed byed na/ /skyes na ci zhig bskyed du yod/*

13. How can unborn birth give birth to itself? If the born gives birth, when it has been born, what would be born?

14. */skyes dang ma skyes skye bzhin pa/ /ji lta bur yang mi skyed pa/ /de ni song dang ma song dang/ / bgom pas rnam par bshad pa yin/*

14. The born and the unborn, the being born do not in any way give birth. That has been explained by the gone, not gone and going.

15. */gang tshe skye ba yod pa na/ /skye bzhin 'di 'byung med pa'i tshe*

ji ltar skye la brten nas ni/ /skye bzhin zhes ni brjod par bya/

15. When being born does not arise in what is born, then how can one say “[it is] being born in dependence on the born”?

16. */rten cing 'byung ba gang yin pa/ /de ni ngo bo nyid kyis zhi/ /de phyir skye bzhin nyid dang ni/ /skye ba yang ni zhi ba nyid/*

16. Whatever is dependently arising, that is by nature pacified. Therefore, being born and what is born too are pacified.

[Ts. 174-6 gives a good summary of the identity of dependent arising and emptiness with citations, including (174): “Whoever sees dependent and relational arising sees the Dharma; whoever sees the Dharma sees the Buddha.” and (175) “What is born from conditions is unborn. By its very nature it has no birth. What is dependent on conditions is said to be empty. He who knows emptiness is conscientious (*bag yod*)”]

17. */gal te dngos po ma skyes pa/ /'ga' zhig gang na yod gyur na/ /de ni skye 'gyur dngos po de/ /med na ci zhig skye bar 'gyur/*

17. If any unborn thing existed anywhere, on being born that [unborn] thing would not exist. If so, what would be born?

18. */gal te skye ba de yis ni/ /skye bzhin pa ni skyed byed na/ /skye ba de ni skye ba lta/ /gang zhig gis ni skyed par byed/*

18. If that which has been born gives birth to what is being born, what [other thing] that has been born would be giving birth to that which has been born?

19. */gal te skye ba gzhan zhig gis/ /de skyed thug pa med par 'gyur/ /ci ste skye ba med skye na/ /thams cad de bzhin skye bar 'gyur/*

19. If another [thing] that has been born gives birth [to it], this would be endless. If it is born without [another] which has been born [OR if it is born without being born], everything

would be born like that [i.e. causelessly].

20. */re zhig yod dang med pa yang/ /skye bar rigs pa ma yin zhing/ /yod med nyid kyang ma yin zhes/ / gong du bstan pa nyid yin no/*

20. Thus it is not reasonable for what exists or does not exist to be born. It has been shown above that there is no existent or non-existent.

21. */dngos po 'gag bzhin nyid la ni/ /skye ba 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/ /gang zhig 'gag bzhin ma yin pa/ /de ni dngos por mi 'thad do/*

21. It is not tenable for a thing that is perishing to be born. It is not tenable for that which is not perishing to be a thing.

22. */dngos po gnas pa mi gnas te/ /dngos po mi gnas gnas pa min/ /gnas bzhin pa yang mi gnas te/ /ma skyes gang zhig gnas par 'gyur/*

22. A thing that has remained does not remain. A thing that has not [yet] remained does not remain. That which is remaining also does not remain. What unborn [thing] can remain?

23. */dngos po 'gag bzhin nyid la ni/ /gnas pa 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/ /gang zhig 'gag bzhin ma yin pa/ /de ni dngos por mi 'thad do/*

23. It is not possible for a thing that is perishing to remain. It is not possible for that which is not perishing to be a thing.

24. */dngos po thams cad dus kun tu/ /rga dang 'chi ba'i chos yin na/ /gang dag rga dang 'chi med par/ / gnas pa'i dngos po gang zhig yod/*

24. If all things at all times are aging and dying phenomena, what things are there which could remain without aging and dying?

25. */gnas pa gnas pa gzhan dang ni/ /de nyid kyis kyang gnas mi rigs/ /ji ltar skye ba rang dang ni/ / gzhan gyis bskyed pa ma yin bzhin/*

25. It is not reasonable for what remains to remain due to something else that remains or due to itself. This is like how what has been born is not given birth to by itself or another. [cf. v.18-19]

26. */'gags pa 'gag par mi 'gyur te/ /ma 'gags pa yang 'gag mi 'gyur/ /'gag bzhin pa yang de bzhin min/ / ma skyes gang zhig 'gag par 'gyur/*

26. What has ceased does not cease. What has not ceased also does not cease. Likewise what is ceasing also does not. What unborn [thing] can cease? [cf. v. 22]

27. */re zhig dngos po gnas pa la/ /'gag pa 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/ /dngos po mi gnas pa la yang/ /'gag pa 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/*

27. It is not possible for a thing which has remained to cease. It is also not possible for a thing which has not remained to cease.

[past tense "has remained" follows Skt. (K .175). Tib. and Ts. 183 could read: "It is not possible for a thing which remains to cease. It is also not possible for a thing which does not remain to cease."]

28. */gnas skabs de yis gnas skabs ni/ /de nyid 'gag pa nyid mi 'gyur/ /gnas skabs gzhan gyis gnas skabs ni/ /gzhan yang 'gag pa nyid mi 'gyur/*

28. A particular state [of something] does not cause that particular state itself to cease. Moreover, another particular state does not cause that particular state to cease.

[Ts. 184 illustrates this with the example of milk and curds (butter), i.e.: milk does not cause milk to cease, nor do curds cause milk to cease.]

29. */gang tshe chos rnams thams cad kyi/ /skye ba 'thad par mi 'gyur ba/ /de tshe chos rnams thams cad kyi/ /'gag pa 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/*

29. When the birth of all phenomena is not possible, then the cessation of all phenomena is not possible.

30. */re zhig dngos po yod pa la/ /'gag pa 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/ /gcig nyid na ni dngos po dang/ /dngos po med pa 'thad pa med/*

30. Cessation is not possible in an existent thing. Thingness and nothingness are not possible in one.

31. */dngos po med par gyur pa la'ang/ /'gag pa 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/ /mgo gnyis pa la ji ltar ni/ /gcad du med pa de bzhin no/*

31. Cessation is not possible also in what is not a thing. This is similar to how there is no cutting off a second head. [i.e. a person cannot be beheaded twice]

32. */'gag pa rang gi bdag nyid kyis/ /yod min 'gag pa gzhan gyis min/ /ji ltar skye ba rang dang ni/ / gzhan gyis skyed pa ma yin bzhin/*

32. Cessation does not exist by its own self, nor does cessation [exist] by something else. This is like how what has been born is not given birth to by itself or another [cf. 25]

33. */skye dang gnas dang 'jig pa dag/ /ma grub phyir na 'dus byas med/ /'dus byas rab tu ma grub pas/ /'dus ma byas ni ji ltar 'grub/*

33. Because birth and remaining and perishing are not established, there is no conditioned. Because the conditioned is utterly unestablished, how can the unconditioned be established?

34. */rmi lam ji bzhin sgyu ma bzhin/ /dri za'i grong khyer ji bzhin du/ /de bzhin skye dang de bzhin gnas/ /de bzhin du ni 'jig pa gsungs/*

34. Like a dream, like a magician's illusion, like a city of gandharvas, likewise birth and likewise remaining, likewise perishing are taught.

skye ba dang gnas pa dang 'jig pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bdun pa'o//// /

8. Investigation of Act and Actor

(Actors)

1. */byed po yin par gyur pa de/ /las su gyur pa mi byed do/ /byed po ma yin gyur pa yang/ /las su ma gyur mi byed do/*

1. One who exists as an actor does not do that which exists as an act. One who does not exist as an actor also does not do that which does not exist as an act.

2. */yin par gyur la bya ba med/ /byed po med pa'i las su'ang 'gyur/ /yin par gyur la bya ba med/ /las med byed pa por yang 'gyur/*

2. One who exists has no activity; [something] would also exist as an act without an actor. One who exists has no activity; [something] would also exist as an actor without an act.

3. */gal te byed por* ma gyur pa/ /las su ma gyur byed na ni/ /las la rgyu ni med par 'gyur/ /byed pa po yang rgyu med 'gyur/*

[*Lha. *po*]

3. If one who does not exist as an actor did that which does not exist as an act, the act would have no cause; the actor too would have no cause.

4. */rgyu med na ni 'bras bu dang/ /rgyu yang 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/ /de med na ni bya ba dang/ /byed pa po dang byed mi rigs/*

4. If there were no cause, effect and cause would not be evident. If they were non-existent, activity and agent and doing would not be evident.

5. */bya ba la sogs mi rigs na/ /chos dang chos min yod ma yin/ /chos dang chos min med na ni/ /de las byung ba'i 'bras bu med/*

5. If activity etc. did not appear, dharma and adharma would not be evident. If dharma and adharma did not exist, there would be no fruit that comes from them.

6. */'bras bu med na thar pa dang/ /mtho ris 'gyur pa'i lam mi 'thad/ /bya ba dag ni thams cad kyang/ / don med nyid du thal bar 'gyur/*

6. If there were no fruit, the path of liberation and higher states would not be appropriate. Also it would follow that all activities are meaningless.

7. */byed pa por gyur ma gyur pa/ /gyur ma gyur de mi byed de/ /yin dang ma yin gyur cig* la/ /phan tshun 'gal bas** ga la yod/*

[*Lha. *gcig; **ba*]

7. One who exists and does not exist as an actor does not do what exists and does not exist [as an act]. Since existence and non-existence are mutually contradictory in one [thing], where can they exist?

8. */byed pa por ni gyur pa yis/ /ma gyur las ni mi byed de/ /ma gyur pas kyang gyur mi byed/ /'dir yang skyon der thal bar 'gyur/*

8. One who exists as an actor does not do an act which is not existent. One who does not exist [as an actor] also does not do what exists [as an act]. Here too faults will follow for one.

9. */byed pa por ni gyur pa dang/ /bcas pa las ni ma gyur dang/ /gyur ma gyur pa mi byed de/ /gtan tshigs gong du bstan phyir ro/*

9. One who exists as an actor does not do what does not exist as an act and what neither exists or not [as an act], because of what was demonstrated by the proof above.

[Verses 9-11 are suspect. This degree of systematic nit-picking as well as the scholarly reference to “the proof above” seem out of character.]

10. */byed pa por ni ma gyur pas*/ /las ni gyur dang bcas pa dang/ /gyur ma gyur pa mi byed de/ /gtan tshigs gong du bstan phyir ro/*

[*Lha. *pa*]

10. One who does not exist as an actor does not do what exists as an act and what neither exists or not [as an act], because of what was demonstrated by the proof above.

11. */byed pa por gyur ma gyur ni/ /las su gyur dang ma gyur pa/ /mi byed 'di* yang gtan tshigs ni/ /gong du bstan pas shes par bya/*

[*Lha.Ts. *‘dir*]

11. One who neither exists nor does not exist as an actor does not do that which exists and does not exist as an act. Here too this is to be known through the proof demonstrated above.

12. */byed pa po las brten* byas shing/ /las kyang byed po de nyid la/ /brten nas 'byung ba ma gtogs pa**/ /'grub pa'i rgyu ni ma mthong ngo/*

[*Lha. *byed po las la brten; **par*]

12. An actor depends on acts and acts too occur in dependence on an actor. Apart from this, one does not see a cause which is established.

13. */de bzhin nyer len shes par bya/ /las dang byed po bsal* phyir ro/ /byed pa po dang las dag gis/ /dngos po lhag ma** shes par bya/*

[*Lha. *gsal; **ma’ang*]

13. Likewise, one should understand clinging, because act and actor are dispelled. Remaining things too should be understood by means of actor and act.

byed pa po dang las brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa brgyad pa'o/ // /

9. Investigation of the Presence of Something Prior

(Already)

1. */lta dang nyan la sogs pa dang //tshor sogs dang yang dbang byas pa //gang gi yin pa de dag gi //snga rol de yod kha cig smra /*

1. Some say that whatever is involved in seeing, hearing etc. and feeling etc. exists prior to them.

2. */dngos po yod pa ma yin na //lta ba la sogs ji ltar 'gyur //de phyir de dag snga rol na //dngos po gnas pa de yod do /*

2. If [that] thing is not evident, how can there be seeing etc? Therefore, the presence [of that] thing [must] exist before them.

3. */lta dang nyan la sogs pa dang //tshor ba la sogs nyid kyi ni //snga rol dngos po gang gnas pa //de ni gang gis gdags par bya /*

3. What configures/makes known that thing which is present before seeing and hearing etc. and feeling etc.?

4. */lta ba la sogs med par yang //gal te de ni gnas gyur na //de med par yang de dag ni //yod par 'gyur bar the tshom med /*

4. If it were present even without seeing etc., there would be no doubt that they would exist

even without it.

5. */ci yis gang zhig gsal bar byed //gang gis ci zhig gsal bar byed //ci med gang zhig ga la yod //gang med ci zhig ga la yod /*

5. It is illuminated by them; they are illuminated by it. How could it exist without them? How could they exist without it?

6. */lta la sogs pa thams cad kyi //snga rol gang zhig yod pa min //lta sogs nang nas gzhan zhig gis //gzhan gyi tshe na gsal bar byed /*

6. It is not evident prior to the totality of seeing etc. From among seeing etc. a different one illuminates [it] at different times.

7. */lta la sogs pa thams cad kyi //snga rol gal te yod min na //lta la sogs pa re re yi //snga rol de ni ji ltar yod /*

7. If it is not evident prior to the totality of seeing etc., how can it be evident prior to [each of them] seeing etc. individually?

8. */lta po de nyid nyan po de //gal te tshor po'ang de nyid na //re re'i snga rol yod gyur na //de ni de ltar mi rigs so /*

8. If the seer itself [were] the hearer and the feeler [were] it too, if it existed prior to each, in that way it would not make sense.

9. */gal te lta po gzhan nyid la //nyan pa po gzhan tshor gzhan na //lta po yod tshe nyan por* 'gyur //bdag kyang mang po nyid du 'gyur /*

[*Ts. *po*; Lha. *por*]

9. If the seer were different, the hearer different, the feeler different, at the time the seer exists, there would be a hearer. Many selves would come about.

10. */lta dang nyan la sogs pa dang //tshor ba dag la sogs pa dang* //gang las 'gyur ba'i 'byung de la'ang //de ni yod pa ma yin no /*

[*Ts. & Lha. *yang*]

10. Also it is not evident in the elements from which seeing and hearing etc. and feeling etc. occur.

11. */lta dang nyan la sogs pa dang //tshor ba dag la sogs pa yang //gang gi yin pa gal te med //de dag kyang ni yod ma yin /*

11. If that to which seeing and hearing etc. and feeling etc. belong is not evident, they too could not be evident.

12. */gang zhig lta la sogs pa yi //snga rol da lta phyi na med //de la yod do med do zhes //rtog pa dag ni ldog par 'gyur /*

12. Reject the concepts "it exists," "it doesn't exist" about that which is not evident prior to, now or after seeing etc.

snga rol na gnas pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa dgu pa'o // //

10. Investigation of Fire and Firewood

(Fire)

1. */bud shing gang de me yin na //byed pa po dang las gcig 'gyur //gal te shing las me gzhan na //shing med par yang 'byung bar 'gyur /*

1. If firewood were fire, actor and act would be one. If fire were other than wood, it would occur even without wood.

2. */rtag tu 'bar ba nyid du 'gyur //'bar byed rgyu las mi 'byung zhing //rtsom pa don med nyid du 'gyur //de lta yin na las kyang med /*

2. [Fire] would burn permanently and would not arise from causes for burning. Starting [a fire] would be meaningless. If it were like that, there would also be no act.

3. */gzhan la ltos pa med pa'i phyir //'bar bar byed rgyu las mi 'byung //rtag tu 'bar ba yin na ni //rtsom pa don med nyid du 'gyur /*

3. Because [fire] does not depend on anything else, it would not arise from causes for burning. If it burned permanently, starting it would be meaningless.

4. */de la gal te 'di snyam du //sreg bzhin bud shing yin sems na //gang tshe de tsam de yin na //gang gis

bud shing de sreg byed /

4. Concerning this, if one thinks that while burning it is firewood, if it is such only at that time, by what could that firewood be ignited?

5. */gzhan phyir mi phrad phrad med na //sreg par mi 'gyur mi sreg na //'chi bar mi 'gyur mi 'chi na // rang rtags dang yang ldan par gnas /*

5. Because [fire] is other, it would not connect; if it did not connect, it would not ignite; if it did not ignite, it would not die; if it did not die, it would also remain in possession of its own characteristic.

6. */ji ltar bud med skyes pa dang //skyes pa'ang bud med phrad pa bzhin //gal te shing las me gzhan yang //shing dang phrad du** rung bar 'gyur /*

6. Just as a woman connects with a man and a man too with a woman, although fire is other than wood, it is fit to connect with wood.

7. */gal te me dang shing dag ni //gcig gis gcig ni bsal gyur na //shing las me gzhan nyid yin yang //shing dang phrad par 'dod la rag /*

7. If fire and wood eliminated each other, even though fire is something other than wood, it would have to connect with wood.

8. */gal te shing ltos me yin la //gal te me ltos shing yin na //gang ltos me dang shing 'gyur ba //dang por grub pa gang zhig yin /*

8. If fire were dependent on wood and wood were dependent on fire, of what becomes fire and wood dependently, which would be established first?

9. */gal te shing ltos me yin na //me grub pa la sgrub par 'gyur //bud par bya ba'i shing la yang //me med par ni 'gyur pa yin /*

9. If fire were dependent on wood, [already] established fire would be established [again]. Firewood also would be [such] even without fire.

10. */gal te dngos po gang ltos 'grub //de nyid la yang ltos nas ni //ltos bya gang yin de 'grub na //gang la ltos nas gang zhig 'grub /*

10. If a thing (A) is established dependently (on B), [but] if what it depends upon (B) is established also in dependence on that very thing (A), what would be established in dependence on what?

11. */dngos po ltos grub gang yin pa //de ma grub na ji ltar ltos //ci ste grub pa ltos she na //de ni ltos par mi rigs so /*

11. How can a thing (A) which is established dependently (on B) be dependent (on B) when it (A) is not established? If one asks, “how can establishment be dependent?” It is not reasonable for it (A) to be dependent.

12. */shing la ltos pa'i me med de //shing la ma ltos me yang med //me la ltos pa'i shing med de //me la ma ltos shing yang med /*

12. There is no fire that is dependent on wood; there is also no fire that is not dependent on wood. There is no wood that is dependent on fire; there is also no wood that is not dependent on fire.

13. */me ni gzhan las mi 'ong ste //shing la'ang me ni yod ma yin //de bzhin shing gi lhag ma ni //song dang ma song bgom pas bstan /*

13. Fire does not come from something else; fire also does not exist in wood. Likewise, the remainder of wood has been shown by gone, not-gone and going.

14. */shing nyid me ni ma yin te //shing las gzhan pa me yang med //me ni shing dang ldan ma yin //me la shing med der de med /*

14. Wood itself is not fire; fire is also not something other than wood. Fire does not possess wood; wood does not exist in fire; that (fire) does not exist in it.

15. */me dang shing gis bdag dang ni //nye bar len pa'i rim pa kun //bum snam sogs dang lhan cig tu //ma lus par ni rnam par bshad /*

15. Through fire and wood is explained without exception all the stages of self and the grasped and at the same time jugs, cloth and so on.

16. */gang dag bdag dang dngos po rnams //de bcas nyid dang tha dad par //ston pa de dag bstan don la //mkhas so snyam du mi sems so /*

16. I do not think those who teach the identity or difference of self and things are wise in the meaning of the teaching.

me dang bud shing brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bcu pa'o //

11. Investigation of Extremes of Before and After

(Before)

1. */sngon mtha' mngon nam zhes zhus tshe/ /thub pa chen pos min zhes gsungs/ /'khor ba thog ma tha med de/ /de la sngon med phyi ma med/*

1. When asked, "is a before-extreme evident?" the great Muni said, "it is not." Samsara has no beginning, no end; it has no before, no after.

2. */ gang la thog med tha med par/ /de la dbus ni ga la yod/ /de phyir de la snga phyi dang/ /lhan cig rim pa mi 'thad do/*

2. For that without beginning [and] end, where can a middle be in that? Therefore, it is not possible for it to have before, after, and simultaneous phases.

3. */gal te skye ba snga gyur la/ /rga shi phyi ma yin na ni/ /skye ba rga shi med pa dang/ /ma shi bar yang skye bar 'gyur/*

3. If birth were before and aging/death after, there would be birth without aging/death and also without dying one would be born.

4. */gal te skye ba 'phyi 'gyur la/ /rga shi snga ba* yin na ni/ /skye ba med pa'i rga shi ni/ /rgyu med par ni ji ltar 'gyur/*

*[*Lha ma]*

4. If birth were after and aging/death before, how could there be an uncaused aging/death which has no birth?

5. */skye ba dang ni rga shi dag/ /lhan cig rung ba ma yin te/ /skye bzhin pa ni 'chi 'gyur zhing/ /gnyis ka rgyu med can du 'gyur/*

5. It is not suitable for birth and aging/death to be simultaneous; that which is being born would be dying and both would be without cause.

6. */gang la snga phyi lhan cig gi/ /rim pa de dag mi srid pa'i/ /skye ba de dang rga shi de/ /ci yi phyir na spro* bar byed/*

*[Lha *spros]*

6. Why fixate on that birth, that aging/dying, for which the phases of before, after, simultaneity are impossible?

7. */'khor ba 'ba' zhig sngon gyi mtha'/ /yod ma yin par ma zad kyi/ /rgyu dang 'bras bu nyid dang ni/ / mtshan nyid dang ni mtshan gzhi nyid/*

7. It is not just samsara alone that has no before-extreme, cause and fruit themselves, and characteristics and the basis for characteristics themselves,

8. */tshor dang tshor po nyid dang ni/ /don yod gang dag ci yang rung/ /dngos rnams thams cad nyid la yang/ /sngon gyi mtha' ni yod ma yin/*

8. feeling and the feeler, whatever is suitable to bear meaning, also all things have no before-extreme.

/sngon dang phyi ma'i mtha' brtag pa zhes bya ste rab tu byed pa bcu gcig pa'o/ /

12. Investigation of Anguish

(Anguish)

[Tib. has "Investigation of what is made by me and made by others" while Skt. has *duhkha*.]

1. */kha cig sdug bsngal bdag gis byas //gzhan gyis byas dang gnyi gas byas //rgyu med pa* las 'byung bar 'dod //de ni bya bar mi rung ngo /*

*[*Lha. par]*

1. Some assert that anguish arises from being made by self, made by other, by both, without cause. To do that is not suitable.

2. */gal te bdag gis byas gyur na //de phyir brten nas 'byung mi 'gyur //gang phyir phung po 'di dag la // brten nas phung po de dag 'byung /*

2. If it were made by self, therefore it would not be contingently arising, because those aggregates arise contingently on these aggregates.

[A difficulty with this entire chapter is to know what *bdag* (*self*) refers to in the context of the creation of anguish. Does it refer to "oneself", i.e. the person who suffers, or to anguish "itself?" In verse 2, the latter reading would seem to suggest itself, but then it would be at odds with the subsequent verses, where N. explicitly introduces the ideas of *svapudgala* and *parapudgala* (one's own *person* and the other *person*) as the creators of anguish. Verse 10, with its comparison of anguish with external things, likewise would suggest the latter reading. I have chosen to translate the entire chapter (thus leaving v. 10 ambiguous) in the former sense. The crucial issue here, I feel, is the confusion around what it means to say "I cause myself pain."]

3. */gal te 'di las de gzhan zhing //gal te de las 'di gzhan na //sdug bsngal gzhan gyis byas 'gyur zhing // gzhan de dag gis de byas 'gyur /*

3. If that were other than this and if this were other than that, anguish would be made by other and that would be made by those others.

[Ts. 244 is happy with the reading of c-d by Buddhapalita and Sherab Dronme: */gzhan de dag gis 'di byas pas//sdug bsngal gzhan gyis byas par 'gyur/* = "...anguish would be made by others since those others made this."]

4. */gal te gang zag bdag gis ni //sdug bsngal byas na gang bdag gis //sdug bsngal byas pa'i gang zag ni* //sdug bsngal ma gtogs gang zhig yin /*

*[*Lha. de]*

4. If anguish were made by one's own person, who would that person be who has made anguish by himself, but is not included in the anguish?

5. */gal te gang zag gzhan las ni //sdug bsngal 'byung na gzhan zhig gis //sdug bsngal de byas gang sbyin de //sdug bsngal ma gtogs ji ltar rung /*

5. If anguish arose from another person, how could it be suitable for there to be [someone] not included in the anguish, who has been given it by another who made the anguish?

6. */gal te gang zag gzhan sdug bsngal //'byung na gang gis de byas nas //gzhan la ster ba'i gang zag*

gzhan //sdug bsngal ma gtogs gang zhig yin /

6. If anguish arose [from] another person, who would that other person be who, having made it, gives it to someone else, but is not included in the anguish?

[Ts. 246 points out that this verse is not found in Buddhapalita or Sherab Dronme, but is found in Chandrakirti.]

7. */bdag gis byas par ma grub pas //sdug bsngal gzhan gyis ga la byas //gzhan gyis sdug bsngal gang byed pa //de ni de yi bdag byas 'gyur /*

7. Since it is not established as made by self, how can anguish have been made by other? [For] whatever anguish is made by other, that has been made by his self.

8. */re zhig sdug bsngal bdag byas min //de nyid kyis ni de ma byas //gal te gzhan bdag ma byas na //sdug bsngal gzhan byas ga la 'gyur /*

8. Anguish is not made [by] self; that is not made by that itself. If it is not made by an other self, how can anguish be made by other?

9. */gal te re res byas gyur na //sdug bsngal gnyis kas byas par 'gyur //bdag gis ma byas gzhan ma byas* // sdug bsngal rgyu med ga la 'gyur /*

*[*Lha. gzhan gyis ma byas bdag ma byas]*

9. If it is made by each, anguish would be made by both. Not made by self, not made by other, how can anguish have no cause?

10. */sdug bsngal 'ba' zhig rnam pa bzhi //yod ma yin par ma zad kyi //phyi rol dngos po dag la yang // rnam pa bzhi po yod ma yin /*

10. Not only does anguish alone not have the four aspects, external things too do not have the four aspects.

bdag gis byas pa dang gzhan gyis byas pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bcu gnyis pa'o // ///

13. Investigation of Samskaras

(Change)

1. */bcom ldan 'das kyis chos gang zhig//bslu ba de ni brdzun zhes gsungs//'du byed thams cad bslu ba'i chos//des na de dag brdzun pa yin/*

1. The Bhagavan said that whatever dharma is deceptive, that is false. All conditions [are] deceptive dharmas, thus they are false.

[The key to this verse lies in the source of the statement of the Buddha. Hopkins points out that a similar statement is found in the *Dhatuvibhanga-sutra* of the *Majjhima Nikaya* [MN 140: 26, p.1093]. This passage is translated from the Pali as: "For that is false, bhikkhu, which has a deceptive nature, and that is true which has an undeceptive nature - Nibbana. Therefore a bhikkhu possessing [this truth] possesses the supreme foundation of truth. For this, bhikkhu, is the supreme noble truth, namely, Nibbana, which has an undeceptive nature." Tsongkhapa's outline treats this verse under the heading: "explaining non-inherent existence by means of a citation well-known to others." He then cites this text, which reads: "Bhikshus, whatever phenomenon is a deceptive conditioned thing, ('*dus byas*) that is false and whatever phenomenon - nirvana - is undeceptive, that is the sublime truth." And then another: "Likewise, a conditioned thing is also a deceptive phenomenon. It is also an utterly perishing phenomenon." [Ts. 250-1]]

2. */gal te bslu chos gang yin pa//de brdzun de la ci zhig bslu//bcom ldan 'das kyis de gsungs pa//stong nyid yongs su bstan pa yin/*

2. If whatever is a deceptive phenomenon is false, what is deceptive about it [in what way is it deceptive]? That statement by the Bhagavan is a complete presentation of emptiness.

3. */dngos rnams ngo bo nyid med de*//gzhan du 'gyur ba snang phyir ro//dngos bo ngo bo nyid med med// gang phyir dngos rnams stong pa nyid/*

[* Ts. *na*]

3. Things have no essential nature because they are seen to change into something else. Things do not lack an essential nature because things are emptiness.

4. */gal te ngo bo nyid med na//gzhan du 'gyur ba gang gi yin//gal te ngo bo nyid yod na// gzhan du 'gyur bar ji ltar rung */*

[* Lha. *ci ltar bur na gzhan du 'gyur*]

4. If there were no essential nature, whose [nature] would it be to change into something else? If there were an essential nature, how would it be possible to change into something else?

5. */de nyid la ni gzhan 'gyur med//gzhan nyid la yang yod ma yin//gang phyir gzhon nu mi rga ste//gang phyir rgas pa'ang mi rga 'o/*

5. This itself does not change into something else. The other itself too does not [either]. Because youth does not age. Because age too does not age.

6. */gal te de nyid gzhan 'gyur na//'o ma nyid ni zhor 'gyur ro//'o ma las gzhan gang zhig ni//zho yi dngos po yin par 'gyur/*

6. If this itself changes into something else, milk itself would be curds. Something other than milk would be the being of curds.

7. */gal te stong min cung zad yod//stong pa'ang cung zad yod par 'gyur//mi stong cung zad yod min na// stong pa* yod par ga la 'gyur/*

[Lha. *pa'ang*]

7. If a bit of the non-empty existed, a bit of the empty would also exist. If there did not exist a bit of the non-empty, how could the empty exist?

8. */rgyal ba rnams kyis stong pa nyid//lta kun nges par 'byung bar gsungs//gang dag stong pa nyid lta ba//de dag bsgrub tu med par gsungs//*

8. The Conquerors taught emptiness as the forsaking of all views. Those who view emptiness are taught to be without realisation [incurable/incorrigible].

[The source here is given by Candrakirti and Tsongkhapa as the *Ratnakuta Sutra*, i.e. a Mahayana text. "The earliest Mahayana sutras now extant appear to be some of those collected in what came to be called the *Ratnakuta*. ... Some of these were translated into Chinese as early as the latter part of the 2nd century AD." Warder. *Indian Buddhism*, 356. The *Kasyapaparivarta* seems to be one of these early sections, in Warder it is sometimes synonymous with the *Ratnakuta* (in contrast to the *Great Ratnakuta*). It also originates from Andra in South India.

Tsongkhapa quotes a large chunk of the *Kasyapaparivarta* (*'od srungs kyis zhus pa*), pp 260-1, which concludes with this passage: "The Bhagavan said: 'Likewise, Kasyapa, if emptiness is the emerging from (forsaking of) all views, then Kasyapa, he who views emptiness alone cannot possibly be cured."]

'du byed brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bcu sum pa'o // //

14. Investigation of Connections

(Connection)

1. */blta bya lta ba lta ba po//gsum po de dag gnyis gnyis dang//thams cad kyang ni phan tshun du//phrad par 'gyur ba yod ma yin/*

1. The seen, the seeing and the seer: these three do not mutually connect

[as] pairs or all [together].

2. */de bzhin 'dod chags chags pa dang//chags par bya ba nyon mongs pa//lhag pa rnams dang skye mched kyi//lhag ma'ang rnam pa gsum gyis so/*

2. Likewise desire, desiring and the desired, the remaining afflictions and also the remaining sense-fields do [not connect] by three aspects.

3. */gzhan dang gzhan du phrad 'gyur na//gang phyir blta bya la sogs la//gzhan de yod pa ma yin pa//de phyir phrad par mi 'gyur ro/*

3. If the other connects to the other, because the seen and so forth do not exist [as] other, therefore there is no connection.

4. */blta bya la sogs 'ba' zhig la//gzhan nyid med par ma zad kyi//gang yang gang dang lhen cig tu//gzhan par nyid du mi 'thad do/*

4. Not only are the seen and so forth alone not existing as other,

it is invalid for anything simultaneous with something to be other [than it].

5. */gzhan ni gzhan la brtan te gzhan//gzhan med par gzhan gzhan mi 'gyur//gang la brten te gang yin pa//de ni de las gzhan mi 'thad/*

5. The other is other in dependence upon the other. Without the other, the other would not be other. It is invalid for whatever is dependent on something to be other than that.

6. */gal te gzhan ni gzhan las gzhan//de tshe gzhan med par gzhan 'gyur//gzhan med par ni gzhan 'gyur ba//yod min de yi phyir na med/*

6. If the other was other than the other, then, without the other, it would be other. Without the other it would not be other. Therefore, it does not exist.

7. */gzhan nyid gzhan la yod ma yin//gzhan ma yin la'ang yod ma yin//gzhan nyid yod pa ma yin na// gzhan nam de nyid yod ma yin//*

7. Otherness does not exist in the other. Nor does it exist in what is not other. If otherness does not exist, neither the other nor that itself exists.

8. */de ni de dang phrad pa med//gzhan dang gzhan yang phrad mi 'gyur//phrad bzhin pa dang phrad pa dang//phrad pa po yang yod ma yin/*

8. That does not connect with that. The other too does not connect with the other. The connecting, the connection and the connector too do not exist.

phrad pa brtag pa zhes bya ste rab tu byed pa bcu bzhi pa'o // //

15. Investigation of Essences

(*Essence)*

1. */rang bzhin rgyu dang rkyen las ni//'byung bar rigs pa ma yin no//rgyu dang rkyen las gang byung ba'i//rang bzhin byas pa can du 'gyur/*

1. It is unreasonable for an essence to arise from causes and conditions.

Whatever essence arose from causes and conditions would be something that has been made.

2. */rang bzhin byas pa can zhes byar//ci ltar bur na rung bar 'gyur//rang bzhin dag ni bcos min dang// gzhan la ltos pa med pa yin/*

2. How is it possible for there to be "an essence which has been made?"

Essences are not contrived and not dependent on anything else.

3. */rang bzhin yod pa ma yin na//gzhan gyi dngos po ga la yod//gzhan gyi dngos po'i rang bzhin no// gzhan gyi dngos po yin zhes brjod/*

3. If an essence does not exist, how can the thingness of the other exist?

[For] the essence of the thingness of the other is said to be the thingness of the other.

[There is a problem here with the Tibetan translation from Sanskrit. *Svabhava* is translated as *rang bzhin*, but *parabhava* rather clumsily as *gzhan gyi dngos po* [the term first appears in I:3]. A Tibetan reader would thus lose the etymological connection between "own-thing" (*svabhava*) and "other-thing" (*parabhava*), which then link up with "thing" (*bhava*) and no-thing (*abhava*). Nagarjuna is playing on the word "thing".]

4. */rang bzhin dang ni gzhan dngos dag//ma gtogs dngos po gang [Ts.=ga] la yod//rang bzhin dag ni gzhan dngos dag//yod na dngos po 'grub par 'gyur/*

4. Apart from an essence and the thingness of the other, what things are there? If essences and thingnesses of others existed, things would be established.

5. */gal te dngos po ma grub na//dngos med grub par mi 'gyur ro//dngos po gzhan du 'gyur ba ni//dngos med yin par skye bo smra/*

5. If things were not established, non-things would not be established.

[When] a thing becomes something else, people say that it is a non-thing.

6. */gang dag rang bzhin gzhan dngos dang//dngos dang dngos med nyid lta ba//de dag sangs rgyas bstan pa la//de nyid mthong ba ma yin no/*

Those who view essence, thingness of the other, things and non-things do not see the

suchness in the teaching of the awakened.

7. */bcom ldan dngos dang dngos med pa//mkhyen pas ka tya ya na yi//gdams ngag las ni yod pa dang// med pa gnyi ga'ang dgag par mdzad/*

7. Through knowing things and non-things, the Buddha negated both existence and non-existence in his *Advice to Katyayana***.**

8. */gal te rang bzhin gyis yod na//de ni med nyid mi 'gyur ro//rang bzhin gzhan du 'gyur ba ni//nam yang 'thad pa mi 'gyur ro/*

8. If [things] existed essentially, they would not come to non-existence.

It is never the case that an essence could become something else.

9. */rang bzhin yod pa ma yin na//gzhan du 'gyur ba gang gi yin//rang bzhin yod pa yin na yang//gzhan du 'gyur ba gang gi yin/*

9. If essences did not exist, what could become something else? Even if essences existed, what could become something else?

10. */yod ces bya ba rtag par 'dzin//med ces bya ba chad par lta//de phyir yod dang med pa la//mkhas pas gnas par mi bya'o/*

10. "Existence" is the grasping at permanence; "non-existence" is the view of annihilation. Therefore, the wise do not dwell, in existence or non-existence.

11. */gang zhig rang bzhin gyis yod pa//de ni med pa min pas rtag//sngon byung da ltar med ces pa//das na chad par thal bar 'gyur/*

11. "Since that which exists by its essence is not non-existent," is [the view of] permanence. "That which arose before is now non-existent,"leads to [the view of] annihilation.

rang bzhin brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bco lnga pa'o // //

16. Investigation of Bondage and Freedom

(*Life*)

1. */gal te 'du byed 'khor zhe na//de dag rtag na mi 'khor te//mi rtag na yang 'khor mi 'gyur//sems can la yang rim 'di mtshungs/*

1. If it is said that impulses are "samsara", if they were permanent, they would not move around. Even if impermanent, they would not move around. Sentient beings too are similar in this respect.

2. */gal te gang zag 'khor zhe na//phung po skye mched khams rnams la//de ni rnam pa lngas bstal na// med na gang zhig 'khor bar 'gyur/*

2. If it is said that persons "move around," if they are non-existent when searched for in five aspects among the aggregates, sense fields and elements, what would move around?

3. */nye bar len nas nyer len par//'khor na srid pa med par 'gyur//srid med nye bar len med na//de gang ci zhig 'khor bar 'gyur/*

3. If one moves around in having clung [to something] and then clinging [to something else], there would be no becoming. If there were no clinging and no becoming, who would move around?

4. */'du byed mya ngan 'da' bar ni//ci ltar bur yang mi 'thad do//sems can mya ngan 'da' bar yang//ci ltar bur yang 'thad mi 'gyur/*

4. It is in no way feasible that impulses go beyond misery.

And it is in no way feasible that living beings go beyond misery.

5. */skye 'jig chos can 'du byed rnams//mi 'ching grol bar mi 'gyur te//snga ma bzhin du sems can yang// mi 'ching grol bar mi 'gyur ro/*

5. Impulses that have the properties of being born and dying are not bound and will not be freed. In the same way as above living beings too are not bound and will not be freed.

6. */gal te nye bar len 'ching na//nye bar len bcas 'ching mi 'gyur//nye bar len med mi 'ching ste//gnas skabs gang zhig 'ching bar 'gyur/*

6. If clinging binds, the one who has clinging would not be bound.

And there would be no bondage without clinging. In what situation would there be bondage?

7. */gal te bcing bya'i snga rol na//'ching ba yod na 'ching la rag//de yang med de lhag ma ni//song dang ma song bgom pas bstan/*

7. If binding existed prior to one who is bound, [that unbound person] would depend on binding. That too cannot be. The rest has been explained by the gone, the not-gone and the going.

8. */re zhig bcings pa mi 'grol te//ma bcings pa yang grol mi 'gyur//bcing pa grol bzhin yin 'gyur na// bcing dang grol ba dus gcig 'gyur/*

8. Those who are bound will not be free. And those who are not bound will not be free. If those who are bound become free, bondage and freedom would be simultaneous.

9. */bdag ni len med mya ngan 'da'//myang 'das bdag gir 'gyur ro zhes//de ltar gang dag 'dzin de yis//nyer len 'dzin pa chen po yin/*

9. "I, without clinging, am beyond misery. Nirvana is mine." Those who grasp in that way have great grasping and clinging.

10. */gang la mya ngan 'das bskyed med//'khor ba bsal ba'ang yod min pa//de la 'khor ba ci zhig yin//mya ngan 'das pa'ang ci zhig brtag/*

10. When nirvana is not born and samsara not eliminated, then what is samsara? And what is considered as nirvana?

bcings pa dang thar pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bcu drug pa'o // //

17. Investigation of Actions and Fruits

(Acts)

1. */bdag nyid legs par sdom pa dang//gzhan la phan 'dogs byams sems gang//de chos de ni 'di gzhan du//'bras bu dag gi sa bon yin/*

1. Restraining oneself well and loving thoughts that benefit others are the Dharma which is the seed of fruits here and elsewhere.

2. */drang srong mchog gi las rnams ni//sems pa dang ni bsams par gsungs//las de dag gi bye brag ni// rnam pa du mar yongs su bsgrags/*

2. The great sage has taught all actions to be intention and what is intended. The specifics of those actions are well known to be of many kinds.

3. */de la las gang sems pa zhes//gsungs pa de ni yid gyir 'dod//bsams pa zhes ni gang gsungs pa//de ni lus dang ngag gir 'dod/*

3. In this respect action spoken of as "intention" is regarded as being that of mind. That spoken of as "what is intended" is regarded as being that of body and speech.

4. */ngag dang bskyod dang mi spong ba'i//rnam rig byed min zhes bya gang//spong ba'i rnam rig byed min pa//gzhan dag kyang ni de bzhin 'dod/*

4. Whatever (1) speech and (2) movements and (3) "unconscious not-letting-go," (4) other kinds of unconscious letting-go are also regarded like that.

5. */longs spyod las byung bsod nams dang//bsod nams ma yin tshul de bzhin//sems pa dang ni chos de bdun//las su mngon par 'dod pa yin/*

5. (5) Goodness that arises from enjoyment/use and in the same manner (6) what is not goodness,[and] (7) intention. These seven dharmas are clearly regarded as action.

[This seven-fold division of acts is not traceable to any school of which I am aware. The simpler division into restraint and love found in v. 1 serves a similar purpose to v. 4&5 and has the added advantage of leading into v. 6 through its mention of "fruits".]

6. */gal te smin pa'i dus bar du//gnas na las de rtag par 'gyur//gal te 'gags na 'gag gyur pas//ci ltar 'bras bu skyed par 'gyur/*

6. If the action remained until the time of ripening, it would become permanent. If it stopped, by having stopped, how could a fruit be born?

7. */myu gu la sogs rgyun gang ni//sa bon las ni mngon par 'byung//de las 'bras bu sa bon ni//med na de yang 'byung mi 'gyur/*

7. The continuum of sprouts and so on clearly emerges from seeds, and from that fruits. If there were no seeds, they too would not emerge.

8. */gang phyir sa bon las rgyun dang//rgyun las 'bras bu 'byung 'gyur zhing//sa bon 'bras bu'i sngon 'gro ba//de phyir chad min rtag ma yin/*

8. Because continuums are from seedsand fruits emerge from continuums and seeds precede fruits, therefore, there is no annihilation and no permanence.

9. */sems kyi rgyun ni gang yin pa//sems las mngon par 'byung bar 'gyur//de las 'bras bu sems lta zhig// med na de yang 'byung mi 'gyur/*

9. The continuum of mind clearly emerges from mind, and from that fruits. If there were no mind, they too would not emerge.

10. */gang phyir sems las rgyun dang ni//rgyun las 'bras bu 'byung 'gyur zhing//las ni 'bras bu'i sngon 'gro ba//de phyir chad min rtag ma yin/*

10. Because continuums are from minds and fruits emerge from continuums and actions precede fruits, therefore, there is no annihilation and no permanence.

11. */dkar po'i las kyi lam bcu po//chos sgrub pa yi thabs yin te//chos kyi 'bras bu 'di gzhan du//'dod pa'i yon tan rnam lnga po/*

11. The ten paths of white action are the means of practising Dharma. Here and elsewhere, the fruits of Dharma are the five kinds of sensual qualities.

12. */gal te brtag pa der gyur na//nyes pa chen po mang por 'gyur//de lta bas na brtag pa de//'dir ni 'thad pa ma yin no/*

12. If it were as that investigation, many great mistakes would occur. Therefore, that investigation is not valid here.

13. */sangs rgyas rnams dang rang rgyal dang//nyan thos rnams kyis gang gsungs pa'i//brtag pa gang zhig 'dir 'thad pa//de ni rab tu brjod par bya/*

13. I will fully declare the investigation which is taught by the Buddhas, Pratyekabuddhas and Sravakas, which is valid here.

[The explicit denunciation of v. 12 and the strident certainty of v. 13 are an uncharacteristically heavy-handed and wordy way of telling us that the "right" view is about to be given. Yet the text presents *all* voices with sympathy, suggesting a developmental account of ethics in Buddhism rather than a "we're right - you're wrong" version.]

14. */dpang rgya ji ltar de bzhin chud//mi za las ni bu lon bzhin//de ni khams las rnam pa bzhi//de yang rang bzhin lung ma bstan/*

14. Just like a contract, irrevocable action is like a debt. In terms of realms, there are four types. Moreover, its nature is unspecified.

[nb. "nature" = Skt. *prakrti* = Tib. *rang bzhin*]

15. */spong bas spang ba ma yin te//sgom pas spang ba nyid kyang yin//de phyir chud mi za ba yis//las kyi 'bras bu skyed par 'gyur/*

15. It is not let go of by letting go, but only let go of by cultivation. Therefore through irrevocability are the fruits of acts produced.

16. */gal te spong bas spang ba dang//las 'pho ba yis 'jig 'gyur na//de la las 'jig la sogs pa'i//skyon rnams su ni thal bar 'gyur/*

16. If it perished through being let go of by letting go and the transcendence of the action, then faults would follow such as the perishing of actions.

17. */khams mtshungs las ni cha mtshungs dang//cha mi mtshungs pa thams cad kyi//de ni nyid mtshams sbyor ba'i tshe//gcig pu kho nar skye bar 'gyur/*

17. The very [irrevocability] of all actions in similar or dissimilar realms, that one alone is born when crossing the boundary [i.e. reborn].

18. */mthong ba'i chos la rnam gnyis so//thams cad* las dang las kyi de//tha dad par ni skye 'gyur zhing//rnam par smin kyang gnas pa yin/*

[*Ts. *kun kyi]*

18. In the visible world there are two kinds. Actions of all [types] and that [irrevocability] of actions are produced as different things and remain [so?] even on ripening.

19. */de ni 'bras bu 'pho ba dang//shi bar gyur na 'gag par 'gyur//de yi rnam dbye zag med dang//zag dang bcas par shes par bya/*

19. When the fruit is transcendent and when one dies, that ceases. One should know its divisions to be without-corruption and with-corruption.

20. */stong pa nyid dang chad med dang//'khor ba dang ni rtag pa min//las rnams chud mi za ba'i chos// sangs rgyas kyis ni bstan pa yin/*

20. Emptiness is not annihilation and samsara is not permanent. The dharma of the irrevocability of actions is taught by the Buddha.

21. */gang phyir las ni skye ba med//'di ltar rang bzhin med de'i phyir//gang phyir de ni ma skyes pa//de phyir chud zad mi 'gyur ro/*

21. Because actions are not born, in this way they have no nature. Therefore, because they are not born, therefore they are irrevocable.

22. */gal te las la rang bzhin yod//rtag par 'gyur par the tshom med//las ni byas pa ma yin 'gyur//rtag la bya ba med phyir ro/*

22. If actions existed [by] nature, without doubt they would be permanent. Actions would not be done [by an agent] because what is permanent cannot be done.

23. */ci ste las ni ma byas na//ma byas pa dang phrad 'jigs 'gyur//tshangs spyod gnas pa ma yin pa'ang//de la skyon du thal bar 'gyur/*

23. If actions were not done [by anyone], one would fear meeting what [one] has not done. Also the fault would follow for that [person] of not dwelling in the pure life.

24. */tha snyad thams cad nyid dang yang//'gal bar 'gyur bar the tshom med//bsod nams dang ni sdig byed pa'i//rnam par dbye ba'ang 'thad mi 'gyur/*

24. All conventions also without doubt would be contradictory. Also the distinction between doing good and evil would not be valid.

25. */de ni rnam smin smin gyur pa//yang dang yang du rnam smin 'gyur//gal te rang bzhin yod na ni// gang phyir las gnas de yi phyir/*

25. [When] the ripening of that [action] has ripened it would ripen again and again, because if it existed [by] nature, it would [always] remain.

26. */las 'di nyon mongs bdag nyid la//nyon mongs de dag yang dag min//gal te nyon mongs yang dag min//las ni yang dag ci ltar yin/*

26. This action has the character of affliction and afflictions are not real. If affliction is not real, how can action be real?

27. */las dang nyon mongs pa dag ni//lus rnams kyi ni rkyen du bstan//gal te las dang nyon mongs pa//de stong lus la ci ltar brjod/*

27. Actions and afflictions are taught to be the conditions for bodies. If actions and afflictions are empty, how can one speak of bodies?

28. */ma rig bsgrib pa'i skye bo gang//sred ldan de ni za ba po//de yang byed las gzhan min zhing//de nyid de yang ma yin no/*

28. People who are obscured by ignorance, those with craving, are the consumers [of the fruits of action]. They are not other than those who do the action and they are also not those very ones.

29. */gang gi phyir na las 'di ni//rkyen las byung ba ma yin zhing//rkyen min las byung yod min pa//de phyir byed pa po yang med/*

29. Because the action does not emerge from conditions and does not emerge from non-conditions, therefore, the agent too does not exist.

30. */gal te las dang byed med na//las skyes 'bras bu ga la yod//ci ste 'bras bu yod min na//za ba po lta ga la yod/*

30. If neither the action nor the agent exists, where can there be a fruit of the action? If the fruit does not exist, where can the consumer exist?

31. */ci ltar ston pas sprul ba ni//rdzu 'phrul phun tshogs kyis sprul zhing//sprul pa de yang sprul pa na//slar yang gzhan ni sprul pa ltar/*

31. Just as a teacher creates a creation by a wealth of magical powers, and just as if that creation too created, again another would be created,

32. */de bzhin byed po das las gang//byas pa'ang sprul pa'i rnam pa bzhin//dper na sprul pas sprul gzhan*

zhig//sprul pa mdzad pa de bzhin no/

32. Like this, whatever action too done by that agent [is]also like the aspect of a creation. It is just like, for example, a creation creating another creation.

33. */nyon mongs las dang lus rnams dang//byed pa po dang 'bras bu dag//dri za'i grong khyer lta bu dang//smig rgyu rmi lam 'dra ba yin/*

33. Afflictions, actions and bodies and agents and fruits are like a city of gandharvas, a mirage, a dream.

las brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bcu bdun pa'o // //

18. Investigation of Self and Things

(Self)

1. */gal te phung po bdag yin na//skye dang 'jig pa can du 'gyur//gal te phung po rnams las gzhan//phung po'i mtshan nyid med par 'gyur/*

1. If the aggregates were self, it would be possessed of arising and decaying. If it were other than the aggregates, it would not have the characteristics of the aggregates.

2. */bdag nyid yod pa ma yin na//bdag gi yod pa ga la 'gyur//bdag dang bdag gi zhi ba'i phyir//ngar 'dzin nga yir 'dzin med 'gyur/*

2. If the self did not exist, where could what is mine exist? In order to pacify self and what is mine, grasping I and grasping mine can exist no more.

3. */ngar 'dzin nga yir 'dzin med gang//de yang yod pa ma yin te//ngar 'dzin nga yir 'dzin med par//gang*

gis mthong bas mi mthong ngo/

3. The one who does not grasp at me and mine likewise does not exist.

Whoever sees the one who does not grasp at me and mine does not see.

[c-d are omitted on the grounds of their being a reiteration of a-b]

4. */nang dang phyi rol nyid dag la//bdag dang bdag gi snyam zad na//nye bar len pa 'gag 'gyur zhing//de zad pas na skye ba zad/*

4. When one ceases thinking of inner and outer things as self and mine, clinging will come to a stop. Through that ceasing, birth will cease.

5. */las dang nyon mongs zad pas thar//las dang nyon mongs rnam rtog las//de dag spros las spros pa ni// stong pa nyid kyis 'gag par 'gyur/*

5. Through the ceasing of action and affliction, there is freedom. Action and affliction [come] from thoughts and they from fixations. Fixations are stopped by emptiness.

6. */bdag go zhes kyang btags gyur cing//bdag med ces kyang bstan par 'gyur//sangs rgyas rnams kyis bdag dang ni//bdag med 'ga' med ces kyang bstan/*

6. It is said that "there is a self," but "non-self" too is taught. The buddhas also teach there is nothing which is "neither self nor non-self."

[Tsongkhapa (325) cites the *Kasyapaparvrtti* as a source here]

7. */brjod par bya ba ldog pa ste//sems kyi spyod yul ldog pas so//ma skyes pa dang ma 'gags pa//chos nyid mya ngan 'das dang mtshungs/*

7. That to which language refers is denied, because an object experienced by the mind is denied. The unborn and unceasing nature of reality is comparable to nirvana.

[Tsongkhapa (326) explains that c-d are an answer to the question implied in 5c-d, i.e. "how does emptiness stop fixations?"]

8. */thams cad yang dag yang dag min//yang dag yang dag ma yin nyid//yang dag min min yang dag min//de ni sangs rgyas rjes bstan pao/*

8. Everything is real, not real; both real and not real; neither not real nor real: this is the teaching of the Buddha.

9. */gzhan las shes min zhi ba dang//spros pa rnams kyis ma spros pa//rnam rtog med don tha dad min//de ni de nyid mtshan nyid do/*

9. Not known through others, peaceful, not fixed by fixations,

without conceptual thought, without differentiation: these are the characteristics of suchness.

10. */gang la brtan te gang 'byung ba//de ni re zhig de nyid min//de las gzhan pa'ang ma yin phyir//de phyir chad min rtag ma yin/*

10. Whatever arises dependent on something else is at that time neither that very thing nor other than it. Hence it is neither severed nor permanent.

11. */sangs rgyas 'jig rten mgon rnams kyi//bstan pa bdud rtsir gyur pa de//don gcig ma yin tha dad min// chad pa ma yin rtag ma yin/*

[Buddhapalita commentary gives: */don gcig min don tha dad min//chad pa ma yin rtag min pa//de ni sangs rgyas 'jig rten gyi//mgon po'i bstan pa bdud rtsi yin/*]

11. That ambrosial teaching of the buddhas, those guardians of the world, is neither the same nor different, neither severed nor permanent.

[Buddhapalita commentary: **Not the same, not different, not severed, not permanent - that is the ambrosial teaching of the buddha, the guardian of the world.**]

12. */rdzogs sangs rgyas rnams ma byung zhing//nyan thos rnams kyang zad pa na//rang sangs rgyas kyi ye shes ni//sten* pa med las rab tu skye/*

*[*Lha:* rten. *Buddhapalita:* brten pa med. *Ts*. sten. *Skt:* asamsargat.*]*

12. When perfect buddhas do not appear, and when their disciples have died out, the wisdom of the self-awakened ones will vividly arise without reliance.

bdag dang chos brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bco brgyad pa'o // //

19. Investigation of Time

(Time)

1. */da ltar byung dang ma 'ongs pa//gal te 'das la ltos gyur na//da ltar byung dang ma 'ongs pa//'das pa'i dus ni yod par 'gyur/*

1. If the present and the future were contingent on the past, then the present and the future would have existed in the past.

2. */da ltar byung dang ma 'ongs pa//gal te de ni med gyur na// da ltar byung dang ma 'ongs pa//ci ltar de la ltos par 'gyur/*

2. If the present and future did not exist there, then how could the present and the future be contingent on it?

3. */'das pa la ni ma ltos par//de gnyis grub pa yod ma yin//de phyir da ltar byung ba dang//ma 'ong dus kyang yod ma yin/*

3. Without being contingent on the past neither can be established. Hence the present and the future times also do not exist.

4. */rim pa'i tshul ni 'di nyid kyis//hlag ma gnyis po bsnor ba dang//mchog dang tha ma 'bring la sogs// gcig la sogs pa'ang shes par bya/*

4. These very stages can be applied to the other two. Superior, inferior, middling etc., singularity and so on can also be understood [thus].

[a-b: this means that you could say the same about past and future in relation to the present and present and past in relation to future as you can of present and future in relation to past as Nagarjuna has just done in v. 1-3.]

5. */mi gnas dus ni 'dzin mi byed//gang zhig gzung bar bya ba'i dus//gnas pa yod pa ma yin pas//ma bzung dus ni ji ltar gdags/*

5. Non-dwelling time cannot be apprehended. Since time which can be apprehended, does not exist as something which dwells, how can one talk of unapprehendable time?

6. */gal te dus ni dngos rten te//dngos med dus ni ga la yod//dngos po 'ga' yang yod min na//dus lta yod par ga la 'gyur/*

6. If time depended on things, where would time which is a non-thing exist? If there were no things at all, where would a view of time exist?

dus brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa bcu dgu pa'o // //

20. Investigation of Combination

(Combination)

1. */gal te rgyu dang rkyen rnams kyi//tshogs pa nyid las skye 'gyur zhing//tshogs la 'bras bu yod na ni//ji ltar tshogs pa nyid las skye/*

1. If a fruit is born from the combination of cause and conditions and exists in the combination, how can it be born from the combination itself?

2. */gal te rgyu dang rkyen rnams kyi//tshogs pa nyid las skye 'gyur zhing//tshogs la 'bras bu med na ni//ji ltar tshogs pa nyid las skye/*

2. If a fruit is born from the combination of cause and conditions and does not exist in the combination, how can it be born from the combination itself?

3. */gal te rgyu dang rkyen rnams kyi//tshogs la 'bras bu yod na ni//tshogs la gzung du yod rigs na//tshogs pa nyid la gzung du med/*

3. If the fruit exists in the combination of cause and conditions, it would be correct for it to be apprehendable in the combination but it is not apprehendable in the combination.

4. */gal te rgyu dang rkyen rnams kyi//tshogs la 'bras bu med na ni//rgyu rnams dang ni rkyen dag kyang// rgyu rkyen ma yin mtshungs par 'gyur/*

4. If the fruit does not exist in the combination of cause and conditions, the causes and conditions would be comparable to non-causes and conditions.

5. */gal te rgyus ni 'bras bu la//rgyu byin nas ni 'gag 'gyur na//gang byin pa dang gang 'gags pa'i//rgyu*

yi bdag nyid gnyis su 'gyur/

5. If the cause stops once it has given the cause to the fruit, there would be a double nature of the cause: one that gives and one that stops.

6. */gal te rgyus ni 'bras bu la//rgyu ma byin par 'gag 'gyur na//rgyu 'gags nas ni skyes pa yi//'bras bu de dag rgyu med 'gyur/*

6. If the cause stops without having given the cause to the fruit, those fruits which are born after the cause has stopped would be uncaused.

7. */gal te tshogs dang lhan cig tu//'bras bu yang ni skye 'gyur na//skyed par byed dang bskyed bya gang// dus gcig par ni thal bar 'gyur/*

7. If the fruit were also born at the same time as the combination, it would follow that the producer and the produced would be simultaneous.

8. */gal te tshogs pa'i snga rol du//'bras bu skyes par gyur na ni//rgyu dang rkyen rnams med pa yi//'bras bu rgyu med 'byung bar 'gyur/*

8. If the fruit were born prior to the combination, there would occur an uncaused fruit which has no cause and conditions.

9. */gal te rgyu 'gags 'bras bu na//rgyu ni kun tu 'pho bar 'gyur//sngon skyes pa yi rgyu yang ni//yang skye bar ni thal bar 'gyur/*

9. If [when] a cause stops, it is forever transferred to the fruit, then it would follow that the cause which was born before would be born again.

10. */'gags pa nub par gyur pa yis//'bras bu skyes pa ji ltar skyed//'bras bu dang ni 'brel ba'i rgyu//gnas pas kyang ni ji ltar skyed/*

10. How can the production of fruit be produced by the stopping and disappearing [of something]? Also how can fruit be produced by related causes which persist with it?

11. */ci ste rgyu 'bras ma 'brel na//'bras bu gang zhig skyed par byed//rgyus ni mthong dang ma mthong bar//'bras bu skyed par mi byed do/*

11. If cause and fruit are not related, what fruit can be produced? Causes do not produce fruits they either see or don't see.

12. */'bras bu 'das pa rgyu 'das dang//ma skyes pa dang skyes pa dang//lhan cig phrad par 'gyur pa ni//*

nam yang yod pa ma yin no/

12. The simultaneous connection of a past fruit with a past, a future and a present cause never exists.

13. */'bras bu skyes pa rgyu ma skyes//'das pa dang ni skyes pa dang//lhan cig phrad par 'gyur pa ni//nam yang yod pa ma yin no/*

13. The simultaneous connection of a present fruit with a future, a past and a present cause never exists.

14. */'bras bu ma skyes rgyu skyes dang//ma skyes pa dang 'das pa dang//lhan cig phrad par 'gyur ba ni// nam yang yod pa ma yin no/*

14. The simultaneous connection of a future fruit with a present, a future and a past cause never exists.

15. */phrad pa yod pa ma yin na//rgyus ni 'bras bu ji ltar skyed//phrad pa yod pa yin na yang//rgyus ni 'bras bu ji ltar skyed/*

15. When there is no connection, how can a cause produce fruit? Even when there is connection, how can a cause produce fruit?

16. */gal te 'bras bus stong pa'i rgyus//ji ltar 'bras bu skyed par byed//gal te 'bras bus mi stong rgyus//ji ltar 'bras bu skyed par byed/*

16. If a cause is empty of fruit, how can it produce fruit? If a cause is not empty of fruit, how can it produce fruit?

[Ts. 353 appears to read *stong* in this context as simply "absent". This verse and 17-18 indicate N's fluid, non-dogmatic use of the term "empty".]

17. */'bras bu mi stong skye mi 'gyur//mi stong 'gag par mi 'gyur ro//mi stong de ni ma 'gags dang//ma skyes par yang 'gyur ba yin/*

17. Unempty fruit would not be produced; the unempty would not stop. That unempty is unstoppable and also unproducable.

18. */stong pa ji ltar skye 'gyur zhing//stong pa ji ltar 'gag par 'gyur//stong pa de yang ma 'gags dang//ma skyes par yang thal bar 'gyur/*

18. How would empty [fruit] be produced? And how would the empty stop? It follows that that empty too is unstoppable and also unproducable.

[Ts. 354 gets round this by saying: "**How would** fruit which is **empty** of inherent existence **be** intrinsically **produced**? **And how would** it **stop** by its own nature?" This adds something that is not there in Nagarjuna in order to conform to Ts's insistence that *stong pa* ALWAYS means *rang bzhin gyis stong pa*.]

19. */rgyu dang 'bras bu gcig nyid du//nam yang 'thad par mi 'gyur ro//rgyu dang 'bras bu gzhan nyid du//nam yang 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/*

19. It is never possible that cause and fruit are identical. It is never possible that cause and fruit are other.

20. */rgyu dang 'bras bu gcig nyid na//bskyed bya skyed byed gcig tu 'gyur//rgyu dang 'bras bu gzhan nyid na//rgyu dang rgyu min mtshungs par 'gyur/*

20. If cause and fruit were identical, produce and producer would be identical. If cause and fruit were other, cause and non-cause would be similar.

21. */'bras bu ngo bo nyid yod na//rgyus ni ci zhig skyed par byed//'bras bu ngo bo nyid med na//rgyus ni ci zhig skyed par byed/*

21. If fruit existed essentially, what would a cause produce? If fruit did not exist essentially, what would a cause produce?

[Ts. 354-5 has the same difficulty as in 16-18 with l. c-d. He explains that a non-inherently existing fruit would not be produced by a cause in the sense that non-inherently existence things are also non-inherently existent. This is another example of Ts. forcing Nagarjuna into his interpretative scheme. It also shows Ts. as somewhat "incurable". G. 266 also fudges this difficulty: "from the ultimate standpoint it does not arise."]

22. */skyed par byed pa ma yin na//rgyu nyid 'thad par mi 'gyur ro//rgyu nyid 'thad pa yod min na//'bras bu gang gi yin par 'gyur/*

22. If it were not productive, the cause itself would be impossible. If the cause itself were impossible, whose would the fruit be?

23. */rgyu rnams dang ni rkyen dag gi//tshogs pa gang yin de yis ni//bdag gis bdag nyid mi skyed na//'bras bu ji ltar skyed par byed/*

23. If whatever is a combination of causes and conditions does not produce itself by itself, how could it produce fruit?

24. */de phyir tshogs pas byas pa med//tshogs min byas pa'i 'bras bu med//'bras bu yod pa ma yin na// rkyen gyi tshogs pa ga la yod/*

24. Therefore, there is no fruit which has been made by combination [or] made by non-combination. If fruit does not exist, where can a combination of conditions exist?

tshogs pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu pa'o////

21. Investigation of Rising and Passing

(Disappearance)

1. */'jig pa 'byung ba med par ram/ /lhan cig yod pa nyid ma yin/ /'byung ba 'jig pa med par ram/ /lhan cig yod pa nyid ma yin //*

1. Passing does not exist without or together with rising. Rising does not exist without or together with passing.

[The Sanskrit terms *sambhava* (*'byung ba/rising*) and *vibhava* (*'jig pa/passing*) are related to *bhava* (*dgnos po/thing*); also cf. *svabhava* and *parabhava*. So "appearance" and "disappearance" would capture the play on the two words. Not also that in verses 15-16 the Tib. *'byung/'jig* does not translate *sambhava/vibhava*, but *udaya/vyaya*]

2. */'jig pa 'byung ba med par ni/ /ji lta bur na yod par 'gyur/ /skye ba med par 'chi bar 'gyur/ /'jig pa 'byung ba med par med //*

2. How can passing exist without rising? Is there death without birth? There is no passing without rising.

3. */'jig pa 'byung dang lhan cig tu/ /ji ltar yod pa nyid du 'gyur/ /'chi ba skye dang dus gcig tu/ /yod pa nyid ni ma yin no //*

3. How could passing exist together with rising? Death does not exist at the same time as birth.

4. */'byung ba 'jig pa med par ni/ /ji lta bur na yod par 'gyur*/ /dngos po rnams la mi rtag nyid/ /nam yang med pa ma yin no //*

[Lha. **ji ltar yod pa nyid du 'gyur]*

4. How could rising exist without passing? Things are never not impermanent.

5. */'byung ba 'jig dang lhan cig tu/ /ji ltar yod pa nyid du 'gyur/ /skye ba 'chi dang dus gcig tu/ /yod pa nyid ni ma yin no //*

5. How could rising exist together with passing? Birth does not exist at the same time as death.

6. */gang dag phan tshun lhan cig gam/ /phan tshun lhan cig ma yin par/ /grub pa yod pa ma yin pa/ /de dag grub pa ji ltar yod //*

6. How can those that are not established either mutually together or not mutually together be established?

7. */zad la 'byung ba yod ma yin/ /ma zad pa la'ang 'byung ba med/ /zad la 'jig pa yod ma yin/ /ma zad pa la'ang 'jig pa med //*

7. The finished does not rise; the unfinished too does not rise; the finished does not pass; the unfinished too does not pass.

8. */dngos po yod pa ma yin par/ /'byung dang 'jig pa yod ma yin/ /'byung dang 'jig pa med par ni/ /dngos po yod pa ma yin no //*

8. Rising and passing do not exist without the existence of things. Things do not exist without the existence of rising and passing.

9. */stong la* 'byung dang 'jig pa dag/ /'thad pa nyid ni ma yin no/ /mi stong pa la'ang 'byung 'jig dag/ /'thad pa nyid ni ma yin no //*

[Lha. **las* Ts. **la*]

9. Rising and passing are not possible for the empty; rising, passing are not possible for the non-empty also.

10. */'byung ba dang ni 'jig pa dag/ /gcig pa nyid du* mi 'thad do/ /'byung ba dang ni 'jig pa dag/ /gzhan nyid du yang** mi 'thad do //*

[Lha. **ni*. ***gzhan pa nyid du'ang*]

10. Rising and passing cannot possibly be one; rising and passing also cannot possibly be other.

11. */'byung ba dang ni 'jig pa dag/ /mthong ngo snyam du khyod sems na/ /'byung ba dang ni 'jig pa dag/ /gti mug nyid kyis mthong ba yin //*

11. If you think that you can see rising and passing, rising and passing are seen by delusion.

12. */dngos po dngos las mi skye ste/ /dngos po dngos med las mi skye/ /dngos med dngos med mi skye ste/ /dngos med dngos las mi skye'o //*

12. Things are not created from things; things are not created from nothing; nothing is not created from nothing; nothing is not created from things.

13. */dngos po bdag las mi skye ste/ /gzhan las skye ba nyid ma yin/ /bdag dang gzhan las skye ba ni/ /yod min* ji ltar skye bar 'gyur //*

[Lha. **na*]

13. Things are not created from themselves, nor are they created from something else; they are not created from [both] themselves and something else. How are they created?

14. */dngos po yod par khas blangs na/ /rtag dang chad par lta bar ni/ /thal bar 'gyur te dngos de ni/ /rtag dang mi rtag 'gyur phyir ro //*

14. If you assert the existence of things, the views of eternalism and annihilationism will follow, because things are permanent and impermanent.

15. */dngos po yod par khas blangs kyang/ /chad par mi 'gyur rtag mi 'gyur/ /'bras bu rgyu yi 'byung 'jig gi/ /rgyun de srid pa yin phyir ro //*

15. If you assert the existence of things, eternalism and annihilationism will not be, because the continuity of the rising and passing of cause -effect is becoming.

16. */'bras bu rgyu yi* 'byung 'jig gi/ /rgyun de srid pa yin 'gyur na/ /'jig la yang skye med pa'i phyir/ / rgyu ni chad par thal bar 'gyur //*

[Lha. **gal te 'bras rgyu'i*]

16. If the continuity of the rising and passing of cause-effect is becoming, because what has passed will not be created again, it will follow that the cause is annihilated.

17. */dngos po ngo bo nyid yod na/ /dngos med 'gyur bar mi rigs so/ /mya ngan 'das pa'i dus na chad/ / srid rgyun rab tu zhi phyir ro //*

17. If things exist essentially, it would be unreasonable [for them] to become nothing. At the time of nirvana [they] would be annihilated, because the continuity of becoming is totally pacified.

18. */tha ma 'gags par gyur pa na/ /srid pa dang po rigs mi 'gyur/ /tha ma 'gags par ma gyur tshe/ /srid pa dang po rigs mi 'gyur //*

18. If the end stops, it is unreasonable for there to be a beginning of becoming. When the end does not stop, it is unreasonable for there to be a beginning of becoming.

19. */gal te tha ma 'gag bzhin na/ /dang po skye bar 'gyur na ni/ /'gag bzhin pa ni gcig 'gyur zhing/ /skye bzhin pa yang gzhan du 'gyur //*

19. If the beginning is created while the end is stopping, the stopping would be one and the creating would be another.

20. */gal te 'gag bzhin skye bzhin dag/ /lhan cig tu yang rigs min na/ /phung po gang la 'chi 'gyur ba/ /de la skye ba* 'byung 'gyur ram //*

[Lha. **ba'ang*]

20. If it is also unreasonable for stopping and creating to be together, aren't the aggregates that die also those that are created?

21. */de ltar dus gsum dag tu yang/ /srid pa'i rgyun ni mi rigs na/ /dus gsum dag tu gang med pa/ /de ni ji ltar srid pa'i rgyun //*

21. Likewise, if the continuity of becoming is not reasonable at any of the three times, how can there be a continuity of becoming which isnon-existent in the three times?

'byung ba dang 'jig pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu gcig pa'o // //

22. Investigation of the Tathagata

(*Buddhanature*)

[For Ts. 370, this and the following chapter on error both serve to "demonstate that the flow of becoming is empty of inherent existence."]

1. */phung min phung po las gzhan min/ /de la phung med de der med/ /de bzhin gshegs pa phung ldan min/ /de bzhin gshegs pa gang zhig yin /*

1. Not the aggregates, not other than the aggregates; the aggregates are not in him; he is not in them: the Tathagata does not possess the aggregates. What is the Tathagata?

2. */gal te sangs rgyas phung po la/ /brten nas rang bzhin las yod min/ /rang bzhin las ni gang med pa/ /de gzhan dngos las ga la yod /*

[Here and below the sanskrit for *brten pa* is *upadaya* (*upadana*). Only from v. 5 does the Tibetan start using forms of *nyer len*]

2. If the buddha depends on the aggregates, he does not exist from an own-nature. How can that which does not exist from an own-nature exist from an other-nature?

3. */gang zhig gzhan gyi dngos brten nas/ /de bdag nyid du mi 'thad do/ /gang zhig bdag nyid med pa de/ / ji ltar de bzhin gshegs par 'gyur /*

3. It is not tenable for something dependent on other-nature to be self-existent. How can that which has no self-existence be tathagata?

4. */gal te rang bzhin yod min na/ /gzhan dngos yod par ji ltar 'gyur/ /rang bzhin dang ni gzhan dngos dag/ /ma gtogs de bzhin gshegs de gang /*

[l. a-b cf. 2.c-d: */rang bzhin las ni gang med pa/ /de gzhan dngos las ga la yod*]

4. If self-nature does not exist, how can there be the existence of other-nature? What is a Tathagata apart from own-nature and other-nature?

5. */gal te phung po ma brten par/ /de bzhin gshegs pa 'ga' yod na/ /de ni da gdong* rten** 'gyur zhing/ / brten nas de nas 'gyur la rag /*

[Lha. **gdod **brten* Ts. **gzod **brten*]

5. If there exists a tathagata [who is] not depending on the aggregates, he exists in depending [on them] now and will henceforth depend.

6. */phung po rnams la ma brten par/ /de bzhin gshegs pa 'ga' yang med/ /gang zhig ma brten yod min na/ /des ni ji ltar nyer len 'gyur /*

6. If there does not exist a tathagata [who is]not depending on the aggregates, how does he grasp [depend on? them]?

[v. 5 & 6 mirror each other grammatically - (cf. Skt.) l.c of v. 6 is effectively redundant; it serves as metric padding for the conditional *na*]

7. */nye bar blangs pa ma yin pa*/ /nye bar len par** cis mi 'gyur/ /nye bar len pa med pa yi/ /de bzhin gshegs pa ci yang med /*

[Ts. **pas*; Lha. ***pa*]

7. [Since] there is nothing to be grasped/dependent on, there can be no grasping/depending. There is no tathagata at all who is without grasping/depending.

8. */rnam pa lngas ni btsal byas na/ /gang zhig de nyid gzhan nyid du/ /med pa'i de bzhin gshegs pa de/ / nye bar len pas ji ltar gdags /*

8. If having examined in five ways, how can that tathagata who does not exist as that one or the other be [conventionally] understood by grasping/depending?

9. */gang zhig nye bar blang ba* de/ /de ni rang bzhin las yod min/ /bdag gi dngos las gang med pa/ /de gzhan dngos las yod re skan /*

[Lha. **pa*]

9. That which is grasped/depended on does not exist from its own nature. It is impossible for that which does not exist from its own nature to exist from another nature.

10. */de ltar nyer blang nyer len po/ /rnam pa kun gyis stong pa yin/ /stong pas de bzhin gshegs stong pa/ / ji lta bur na 'dogs par 'gyur /*

[cf. v. 8; '*dogs = prajnapyate*]

10. In that way, what is grasped/depended on and what grasps/depends are empty in every aspect. How can an empty tathagata be [conventionally] understood by what is empty?

11. */stong ngo zhes kyang mi brjod de/ /mi stong zhes kyang mi bya zhing/ /gnyis dang gnyis min mi bya ste/ /gdags pa'i don du brjod par bya/*

11. Do not say "empty," or "not empty," or "both," or "neither:" these are mentioned for the sake of [conventional] understanding.

12. */rtag dang mi rtag la sogs bzhi/ /zhi ba 'di la ga la yod/ /mtha' dang mtha' med la sogs bzhi/ /zhi ba 'di la ga la yod /*

12. Where can the four such as permanence and impermanence exist in this peaceful one? Where can the four such as end and no-end [of the world] exist in this peaceful one?

13. */gang gis de bzhin gshegs yod ces/ /'dzin pa stug po* bzung gyur pa/ /de ni mya ngan 'das pa la/ /med ces rnam rtog rtog par byed /*

[Lha. **pos* Ts. **po*]

13. Those who hold the dense apprehension, "the tathagata exists" conceive the thought, "he does not exist in nirvana."

[Ts. 378-9 says that while this version is found in Chandrakirti's *Prasannapada*, he prefers the version quoted by Buddhapalita: */gang gis 'dzin stug bzung gyur pa//de ni mya ngan 'das pa la//de bzhin gshegs pa yod ce'am//med ces rnam tog rtog par byed/.* **Those who hold dense apprehensions conceive thoughts of the tathagata's "existence" or "non-existence" in nirvana.]**

14. */rang bzhin gyis ni stong de la/ /sangs rgyas mya ngan 'das nas ni/ /yod do zhe'am med do zhes/ / bsam pa* 'thad pa nyid mi 'gyur /*

[Lha. **pa'ang*]

14. For that one empty of own-nature, it is entirely inappropriate to think that once the buddha has nirvana-ed he either "exists" or "does not exist."

15. */gang dag sangs rgyas spros 'das shing/ /zad pa med la spros byed pa/ /spros pas nyams pa de kun gyis/ /de bzhin gshegs pa mthong mi 'gyur /*

[K. 310. *zad pa med pa* = *avyaya* = non-variable / steadfast]

15. Those who make fixations about Buddha who is beyond fixations and without deterioration -- all those who are damaged by fixations do not see the tathagata.

16. */de bzhin gshegs pa'i rang bzhin gang/ /de ni 'gro 'di'i rang bzhin yin/ /de bzhin gshegs pa rang bzhin med/ /'gro ba 'di yi rang bzhin med /*

16. Whatever is the own-nature of the tathagata, that is the own-nature of this world. The tathagata has no own-nature. This world has no own-nature.

de bzhin gshegs pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu gnyis pa'o // //

23. Investigation of Error

(*Confusion*)

1. */'dod chags zhe sdang gti mug rnams //kun tu rtog las 'byung bar gsungs //sdug dang mi sdug phyin ci log //brten pa nyid las kun tu 'byung/*

1. It is said that desire, hatred, stupidity arise from conceptuality; they arise in dependence on the pleasant, the unpleasant and confusion. [they arise in dependence on confusion about the pleasant and unpleasant]

[K. 312 reads: "perversions regarding the pleasant and unpleasant (i.e. confusing pleasure and displeasure") for l.c. (Inada and Streng agree.) Chandrakirti and Tsongkhapa differ. My tr. follows Ts. 383. The Tibetan could be read either way. The Skt. translation develops the meaning of conceptuality. C. and Ts. quote the *rten 'brel gyi mdo*: "What is the cause of ignorance? Inappropriate attention. Stupidity arises from corrupt attention (*yid la byed pa rnyog pa*)."]

2. */gang dag sdug dang mi sdug dang //phyin ci log las brten 'byung ba //de dag rang bzhin las med de // de phyir nyon mongs yang dag med /*

2. Whatever arises in dependence upon the pleasant, the unpleasant and confusion, (whatever arises in dependence on confusion about the pleasant and unpleasant) they have no own-nature, therefore, afflictions do not really exist (do not exist in themselves).

[Although the Tibetan supports this reading by adding *dang* before *phyin ci log* (thereby making error the third item of a list), the Skt. repeats the exact wording of v.1. Ts. 384 notes the different commentarial glosses on these two verses.]

3. */bdag gi yod nyid med nyid ni //ji lta bur yang grub pa med //de med nyon mongs rnams kyi ni //yod nyid med nyid ji ltar 'grub /*

3. The existence or non-existence of self is not established in any way. Without that, how can the existence or non-existence of afflictions be established?

4. */nyon mongs de* dag gang gi yin //de yang grub pa yod ma yin //'ga' med par ni gang gi yang //nyon mongs pa dag yod ma yin /*

[* Ts. and Lha. '*di*]

4. These afflictions are someone's. But that [someone] is not established. Without [someone], the afflictions are not anyone's.

5. */rang lus lta bzhin nyon mongs rnams //nyon mongs can la rnam lngar med //rang lus lta bzhin nyon mongs can //nyon mongs pa la rnam lngar med /*

5. Like [the self apprehended in] the view of one's own body, the afflictions do not exist in five ways in the afflicted. Like [the self apprehended in] the view of one's own body, the afflicted does not exist in five ways in the afflictions.

6. */sdug dang mi sdug phyin ci log //rang bzhin las ni yod min na //sdug dang mi sdug phyin ci log // brten nas nyon mongs gang dag yin /*

6. If confusion about the pleasant and unpleasant does not exist from its own nature, what afflictions can depend on confusion about the pleasant and unpleasant?

7. */gzugs sgra ro dang reg pa dang //dri dang chos dag rnam drug ni //gzhi ste 'dod chags zhe sdang dang //gti mug gi ni yin par brtags /*

7. Colour/shape, sound, taste, tactile sensation, smell and dharmas: these six are conceived as the basis of desire, hatred and stupidity.

8. */gzugs sgra ro dang reg pa dang, //dri dang chos dag 'ba' zhig ste //dri za'i grong khyer lta bu dang // smig rgyu rmi lam 'dra ba yin /*

8. Colour/shape, sound, taste, tactile sensation, smell and dharmas: these are like gandharva-cities and similar to mirages, dreams.

9. */sgyu ma'i skyes bu lta bu dang //gzugs brnyan 'dra ba de dag la //sdug pa dang ni mi sdug pa //'byung bar yang ni ga la 'gyur /*

9. How can the pleasant and unpleasant occur in those [things] which are like phantoms and similar to reflections?

[K. 317 takes this to mean "how can pleasure or displeasure arise in people who are like illusions etc." This makes little sense in context, and the word "people" is not in the original. G. hedges his bets and opts for ambiguity. Ts. 387 explains this as a question about how the "marks" (*mtshan ma*) of pleasure and displeasure can occur in the six sense objects. So: how can the features of likeability and unlikeability occur in the objects themselves?]

10. */gang la brten nas sdug pa zhes //gdags par bya ba mi sdug pa //sdug la mi ltos yod min pas //de phyir sdug pa 'thad ma yin /*

10. Something is called "pleasant" in dependence on the unpleasant. Since that would not

exist without relation to the pleasant, therefore, the pleasant is not tenable.

11. */gang la brten nas mi sdug par //gdags par bya ba sdug pa ni //mi sdug mi ltos yod min pas //de phyir mi sdug 'thad ma yin /*

11. Something is called "unpleasant" in dependence on the pleasant. Since that would not exist without relation to the unpleasant, therefore, the unpleasant is not tenable.

12. */sdug pa yod pa ma yin na //'dod chags yod par ga la 'gyur //mi sdug yod pa ma yin na //zhe sdang yod par ga la 'gyur /*

12. If the pleasant does not exist, how can desire exist? If the unpleasant does not exist, how can hatred exist?

13. */gal te mi rtag rtag pa zhes //de ltar 'dzin pa log yin na //stong la mi rtag yod min pas //'dzin pa* ji ltar log pa yin /*

[*Lha. *pa'ang*]

[Ts. 389 says that the other three confusions (re: happiness, purity and self) can be substituted for that about impermanence. He gives an alternative for c-d from the "other two great commentaries": */stong la rtag pa yod min pas//'dzin pa ji ltar log ma yin/*]

13. If such an apprehension as "the impermanent is permanent" is confused, since impermanence does not exist in the empty, how can such an apprehension be confused?

14. */gal te mi rtag rtag go zhes //de ltar 'dzin pa log yin na //stong la mi rtag pa'o zhes //'dzin pa'ang ji ltar log ma yin /*

14. If such an apprehension as "the impermanent is permanent" is confused, how would the apprehension "there is impermanence in the empty" also not be confused?

15. */gang gis 'dzin dang 'dzin gang dang //'dzin pa po dang gang gzung ba //thams cad nye bar zhi ba ste //de phyir 'dzin pa yod ma yin /*

15. [The means] by which one apprehends, the apprehension [itself], the apprehender and the apprehended: all are completely pacified, therefore there is no apprehending.

16. */log pa'am yang dag nyid du ni //'dzin pa yod pa ma yin na //gang la phyin ci log yod cing //gang la phyin ci ma log yod /*

16. If there is neither confused nor right apprehension, who is confused and who is not confused?

17. */phyin ci log tu gyur pa la //phyin ci log dag mi srid de //phyin ci log tu ma gyur la //phyin ci log dag mi srid de //*

17. Confusions do not occur for those who are [already] confused; confusions do not occur for those who are not [yet] confused;

18. */phyin ci log tu gyur bzhin la //phyin ci log dag mi srid de //gang la phyin ci log srid pa //bdag nyid kyis ni rnam par dpyod /*

18. confusions do not occur for those who are being confused. For whom do confusions occur? Examine this by yourself!

19. */phyin ci log rnams ma skyes na //ji lta bur na yod par 'gyur //phyin ci log rnams skye med na // phyin ci log can ga la yod /*

19. If confusions are not born, how can they exist? If confusions are not born, where can there be someone who has confusion?

20. */dngos po bdag las mi skye ste //gzhan las skye ba nyid ma yin //bdag dang gzhan las kyang min na // phyin ci log can ga la yod /*

20. Things are not born from themselves, not born from others. If they are also not from self and others, where can there be someone who has confusion?

[K. points out that this verse is missing in Kumarajiva's translation (I. also says it's missing from the Tibetan version) and is "almost identical with XXI: 13." It seems redundant here.]

21. */gal te bdag dang gtsang ba dang //rtag dang bde ba yod na ni //bdag dang gtsang dang rtag pa dang // bde ba phyin ci log ma yin /*

21. If self and purity and permanence and happiness were existent, self and purity and permanence and happiness would not be confusions.

22. */gal te bdag dang gtsang ba dang //rtag dang bde ba med na ni //bdag med mi gtsang mi rtag dang // sdug bsngal yod pa ma yin no /*

22. If self and purity and permanence and happiness were non-existent, selflessness, impurity, impermanence and anguish would not exist.

23. */de ltar phyin ci log 'gags pas //ma rig pa ni 'gag par 'gyur //ma rig 'gags par gyur na ni //'du byed la sogs 'gag par 'gyur /*

23. Thus by stopping confusion, ignorance will stop. If ignorance is stopped, impulsive acts etc. will stop.

24. */gal te la la'i nyon mongs pa //gang dag rang bzhin gyis yod na //ji lta bur na spong bar 'gyur //yod pa su zhig spong bar byed /*

24. If the afflictions of some existed by their own nature, how could they be let go of? Who can let go of what exists by nature?

[Skt. gives *svabhavam* for *yod pa* in l.d]

25. */gal te la la'i nyon mongs pa //gang dag rang bzhin gyis med na //ji lta bur na spong bar 'gyur //med pa su zhig spong bar byed /*

24. If the afflictions of some did not exist by their own nature, how could they be let go of? Who can let go of what does not exist?

phyin ci log brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu gsum pa'o // //

24. Investigation of the Ennobling Truths

(Awakening)

1. */gal te 'di dag kun stong na//'gyur ba med cing 'jig pa med//'phags pa'i bden pa bzhi po rnams//khyod la med par thal bar 'gyur/*

1. "If all were empty, nothing could come about or perish. It would follow for you that the four ennobling truths could not exist.

2. */'phags pai' bden pa bzhi med pas//yongs su shes dang spang ba dang//bsgom dang mngon du bya ba dang//'thad par 'gyur ba ma yin no/*

2. "Since the four ennobling truths would not exist, understanding, letting go, cultivating and realizing would no longer be valid.

3. */de dag yod pa ma yin pas//'bras bu bzhi yang yod ma yin//'bras bu med na 'bras gnas med//zhugs pa dag kyang yod ma yin/*

3. "Since they would not exist, the four fruits would also not exist. If the fruits did not exist, there could be no abiding in the fruits. Experiencing them would also not exist.

4. */gal te skyes bu gang zag brgyad//de dag med na dge 'dun med//'phags pa'i bden rnams med pa'i phyir//dam pa'i chos kyang yod ma yin/*

4. "If those eight beings did not exist, the Community would not exist. Since there would be no ennobling truths, the sublime Dharma could also not exist.

5. */chos dang dge 'dun yod min na//sangs rgyas ji ltar yod par 'gyur//de skad stong pa nyid smra na//dkon mchog gsum la gnod pa ni/*

5. "If the Community and the Dharma did not exist, how could Buddha exist? When you talk of emptiness, the three Jewels are maligned.

6. */byed cing 'bras bu yod pa dang//chos ma yin dang chos yin dang//'jig rten pa yi tha snyad ni//kun la'ang gnod pa byed pa yin/*

6. "The existence of actions and fruits, what is not Dharma and what is Dharma, the conventions of the world: all these too are maligned."

7. */de la bshad pa khyod kyis ni//stong nyid dgos dang stong nyid dang//stong nyid don ni ma rtogs pas//de phyir de ltar gnod pa yin/*

7. An explanation for that: since you do not understand the need for emptiness, emptiness, and the point of emptiness, therefore in that way you malign.

8. */sangs rgyas rnams kyis chos bstan pa//bden pa gnyis la yang dag rten//'jig rten kun rdzob bden pa dang//dam pa'i don gyi bden pa'o/*

8. The Dharma taught by Buddhas perfectly relies on two truths: the ambiguous truths of the world and the truths of the sublime meaning.

9. */gang dag bden pa de gnyis kyi//rnam dbye rnam par mi shes pa//de dag sangs rgyas bstan pa ni//zab mo'i de nyid rnam mi shes/*

9. Those who do not understand the division into two truths, cannot understand the profound reality of the Buddha's teaching.

10. */tha snyad la ni ma brten par//dam pa'i don ni bstan mi nus//dam pa'i don ni ma rtogs par//mya ngan 'das pa thob mi 'gyur/*

10. Without relying on conventions, the sublime meaning cannot be taught. Without understanding the sublime meaning, one will not attain nirvana.

11. */stong pa nyid la blta nyes na//shes rab chung rnams phung par byed//ci ltar sbrul la bzung nyes dang//rigs sngags nyes par bsgrub pa bzhin/*

11. If their view of emptiness is wrong, those of little intelligence will be hurt. Like handling a snake in the wrong way, or casting a spell in the wrong way.

12. */de phyir zhan pas chos 'di yi//gting rtogs dka' bar mkhyen gyur nas//thub pa'i thugs ni chos bstan las//rab tu log par gyur pa yin/*

12. Therefore, knowing how difficult it is for the weak to understand the depths of this Dharma, the heart of the Muni strongly turned away from teaching the Dharma.

13. */skyon du thal bar 'gyur ba ni//stong la 'thad pa ma yin pas//khyod ni stong nyid spong byed pa// gang de nga la mi 'thad do//*

13. Since [those] erroneous consequences do not apply to emptiness, whatever rejections you make of emptiness do not apply to me.

14. */gang la stong pa nyid rung ba//de la thams cad rung bar 'gyur//gang la stong nyid mi rung ba//de la thams cad mi rung 'gyur/*

14. Those for whom emptiness is possible, for them everything is possible. Those for whom emptiness is not possible, for them everything is not possible.

15. */khyod ni rang gi skyon rnams ni//nga la yongs su sgyur byed pa//rta la mngon par zhon bzhin du// rta nyid brjed par gyur pa bzhin/*

15. You are transferring your own mistakes onto me. This is like mounting a horse but

forgetting about the horse itself.

16. */gal te dgnos rnams rang bzhin las//yod par rjes su lta byed na//de lta yin na dngos po rnams//rgyu rkyen med par khyod lta'o/*

16. If you view all things as existing from their own nature, then you would view all things as not having causes and conditions.

17. */'bras bu dang ni rgyu nyid dang//byed pa po dang byed dang bya//kye ba dang ni 'gag pa dang//'bras bu la yang gnod pa byed/*

17. Cause and effect itself, agents, tools and acts, production and cessation, the effects too would be undermined.

18. */rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba gang//de ni stong pa nyid du bshad//de ni brten nas gdags pa ste//de nyid dbu ma'i lam yin no/*

18. Whatever is contingently related, that is explained as emptiness. That is contingently configured; it is the central path.

19. */gang phyir rten 'byung ma yin pa'i//chos 'ga'ng yod pa ma yin pa/ de phyir stong pa ma yin pa'i// chos 'ga'ng yod pa ma yin no/*

19. Because there are no things at all, which are not contingently emergent, therefore, there are no things at all, which are not empty.

20. */gal te 'di kun mi stong na//'byung ba med cing 'jig pa med//'phags pa'i bden pa bzhi po rnams// khyod la med par thal bar 'gyur/*

20. If all were not empty, nothing could come about or perish. It would follow for you that the four ennobling truths could not exist.

21. */rten cing 'byung ba ma yin na//sdug bsngal yod par ga la 'gyur//mi rtag sdug bsngal gsungs pa de// rang bzhin nyid la yod ma yin/*

21. If things were not contingently emergent, how could anguish exist? Impermanent things are taught to be anguish; in their very own nature they do not exist.

22. */rang bzhin las ni yod min* na//ci zhig kun tu 'byung bar 'gyur//de phyir stong nyid gnod byed la// kun 'byung yod pa ma yin no/* [* error?]

22. If it did exist from its own nature, why would it have an origin? Therefore, for those who undermine emptiness, it can have no origin.

23. */sdug bsngal rang bzhin gyis yod la//'gog pa yod pa ma yin no//rang bzhin nyid ni yongs gnas phyir//'gag la'ang gnod pa byed pa yin/*

23. If anguish existed by its own nature, there could be no cessation. Because its own nature would be totally present, cessation too would be undermined.

24. */lam la rang bzhin yod na ni//bsgom pa 'thad par mi 'gyur te//ci ste lam de bsgom byas na//khyod kyi rang bzhin yod ma yin/*

24. If the path existed by its own nature, cultivation would not be appropriate. If the path is to be cultivated, your own nature cannot exist.

25. */gang tshe sdug bsngal kun 'byung dang//'gog pa yod pa ma yin na//lam gyis sdug bsngal 'gog pa ni// gang zhig 'thob par 'gyur bar 'dod/*

25. When anguish, origins and cessation cannot exist, what ceasing of anguish could one seek to attain by the path?

26. */gal te rang bzhin nyid kyis ni//yongs su shes pa ma yin na//de ni ci ltar yongs shes 'gyur//rang bzhin gnas pa ma yin nam/*

26. If non-understanding existed by its very own nature, how could one ever understand? Doesn't it abides by nature?

27. */de bzhin du ni khyod nyid kyi//spang dang mngon du bya ba dang//bsgom dang 'bras bu bzhi dag kyang//yongs shes bzhin du mi rung ngo/*

27. In the same way, your letting go, realizing, cultivating and the four fruits too are as impossible as understanding.

28. */rang bzhin yongs su 'dzin pa yi//'bras bu rang bzhin nyid kyis ni//'thob pa min pa gang yin de//ci ltar 'thob pa nyid du 'gyur/*

28. How can any fruits, which totally hold their own nature and by their own nature are unattained, be attained?

29. */ ’bras bu med na ‘bras gnas med//zhugs pa dag kyang yod ma yin//gal te skyes bu gang zag brgyad// de dag med na dge ‘dun med/*

29. If the fruits did not exist, there could be no abiding in the fruits. Experiencing them would also not exist. If those eight beings did not exist, the Community would not exist.

30. */’phags pa’i bden rnams med pa’i phyir//dam pa’i chos kyang yod ma yin//chos dang dge ‘dun yod min na//sangs rgyas ci ltar yod par ‘gyur/*

30. Since there would be no ennobling truths, the sublime Dharma could also not exist. If the Community and the Dharma did not exist, how could Buddha exist?

31. */khyod kyi* sangs rgyas byang chub la//ma brten par yang thal bar ‘gyur//khyod kyi byang chub sangs rgyas la//ma brten par yang thal bar ‘gyur*

31. It would also follow that your Buddha does not depend on awakening. It would also follow that your awakening does not depend on Buddha.

32. */khyod kyi rang bzhin nyid kyis ni//sangs rgyas min pa gang yin des//byang chub spyod la byang chub phyir//bstsal yang byang chub ‘thob mi ‘gyur/*

32. For you, someone who by his very nature is not Buddha could not attain awakening however much he strove in the practice of awakening for the sake of awakening.

33. */’ga’ yang chos dang chos min pa//nam yang byed par mi ‘gyur te//mi stong ba la ci zhig bya//rang bzhin la ni bya ba med/*

33. No one would ever do what is Dharma and what is not Dharma. What can that which is not empty do? Inherent nature is inactive.

34. */chos dang chos min med par yang//'bras bu khyod la yod par 'gyur//chos dang chos min rgyus byung ba'i//'bras bu khyod la yod ma yin/*

34. Even without Dharma and not-Dharma, you would have the fruits. You would not have the fruits which have arisen from the causes of Dharma and not-Dharma.

35. */chos dang chos min rgyus byung ba'i/''bras bu gal te khyod la yod//chos dang chos min las 'byung ba'i//'bras bu ci phyir stong ma yin/*

35. If you have the fruits which have arisen from the causes of Dharma and not-Dharma, why are the fruits which have arisen from the Dharma and not-Dharma not empty?

36. */rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba yi//stong pa nyid la gnod byed gang//'jig rten pa yi tha snyad ni//kun la'ang gnod pa byed pa yin/*

36. Whoever undermines emptiness which is contingent emergence also undermines all the conventions of the world.

37. */stong pa nyid la gnod byed na//bya ba ci yang med 'gyur zhing/rtsom pa med pa'i bya bar 'gyur//mi byed pa yang byed por 'gyur/*

37. If one undermines emptiness, there would be no actions at all and actions without an author and agents who do not act.

38. */rang bzhin yod na 'gro ba rnams//ma skyes pa dang ma 'gags dang//ther zug tu ni gnas 'gyur zhing// gnas skabs sna tshogs bral bar 'gyur/*

38. If there were inherent nature, all beings would be unborn and unceasing, would be fixed in place forever, separated from the variety of situations.

39. */gal te stong pa yod min na//ma thob 'thob par bya ba dang//sdug bsngal mthar byed las dang ni// nyon mongs thams cad spong ba'ang med/*

39. If [things] were not empty, there could be no attainment of what had not been attained, no ending of anguish and no letting go of all actions and afflictions.

40. */gang gis rten cing ‘brel par ‘byung//mthong ba des ni sdug bsngal dang//kun ‘byung dang ni ‘gog pa dang//lam nyid de dag mthong ba yin/*

40. He who sees contingent emergence sees anguish and origins and cessation and the path itself.

'phags pa'i bden pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu bzhi pa'o // //

25. Investigation of Nirvana

(Nirvana)

1. */gal te 'di dag kun stong na //'byung ba med cing 'jig pa med//gang zhig spong dang 'gags pa las//mya ngan 'da' bar 'gyur bar 'dod/*

1. If everything were empty, there would be no arising and perishing. From the letting go of and ceasing of what could one assert nirvana(-ing)?

2. */gal te 'di kun mi stong na //'byung ba med cing 'jig pa med//gang zhig spong dang 'gags pa las//mya ngan 'da' bar 'gyur bar 'dod/*

2. If everything were not empty, there would be no arising and perishing. From the letting go of and ceasing of what could one assert nirvana(-ing)?

3. */spangs pa med pa thob med pa //chad pa med pa rtag med pa //'gag pa med pa skye med pa //de ni mya ngan 'das par brjod/*

3. No letting go, no attainment, no annihilation, no permanence, no cessation, no birth: that is spoken of as nirvana.

4. */re zhig mya ngan 'das dngos min//rga shi'i mtshan nyid thal bar 'gyur//rga dang 'chi ba med pa yi //*

dngos po yod pa ma yin no/

4. Nirvana is not a thing. Then it would follow that it would have the characteristics of aging and death. There does not exist any thing that is without aging and death.

5. */gal te mya ngan 'das dngos na //mya ngan 'das pa 'dus byas 'gyur/ /dngos po 'dus byas ma yin pa//'ga' yang gang na yod ma yin/*

5. If nirvana were a thing, nirvana would be a conditioned phenomenon. There does not exist any thing anywhere that is not a conditioned phenomenon.

6. */gal te mya ngan 'das dngos na //ji ltar myang 'das de brten min//dngos po brten nas ma yin pa//'ga' yang yod pa ma yin no/*

6. If nirvana were a thing, how would nirvana not be dependent? There does not exists any thing at all that is not dependent.

7. */gal te mya ngan 'das dngos min//dngos med ji ltar rung bar 'gyur//gang la mya ngan 'das dngos min// de la dngos med yod ma yin/*

7. If nirvana were not a thing, how could it possibly be nothing? The one for whom nirvana is not a thing, for him it is not nothing.

8. */gal te mya ngan 'das dngos min//ji ltar myang 'das de brten min//gang zhig brten nas ma yin pa'i// dngos med yod pa ma yin no/*

8. If nirvana were nothing, how could nirvana possibly be not dependent? There does not exist any nothing which is not dependent.

9. */'ong ba dang ni 'gro ba'i dngos//brten tam rgyur byas gang yin pa//de ni brten min rgyur byas min// mya ngan 'das pa yin par bstan/*

9. Whatever things come and go are dependent or caused. Not being dependent and not being caused is taught to be Nirvana.

10. */'byung ba dang ni 'jig pa dag //spang bar ston pas bka' stsal to//de phyir mya ngan 'das par ni// dngos min dngos med min par rigs/*

10. The teacher taught [it] to be the letting go of arising and perishing. Therefore, it is correct that nirvana is not a thing or nothing.

11. */gal te mya ngan 'das pa ni//dngos dang dngos med gnyis yin na//dngos dang dngos po med pa dag//*

thar par 'gyur na de mi rigs/

11. If nirvana were both a thing and nothing, it would follow that it would be a thing and nothing. That is incorrect.

12. */gal te mya ngan 'das pa ni //dngos dang dngos med gnyis yin na//mya ngan 'das pa ma brten min// de gnyis brten nas yin phyir ro/*

12. If nirvana were both a thing and nothing, nirvana would not be not-dependent, because it would depend on those two.

13. */ji ltar mya ngan 'das pa ni//dngos dang dngos med gnyis yin te//mya ngan 'das pa 'dus ma byas// dngos dang dngos med 'dus byas yin/*

13. How could nirvana be both a thing and nothing? Nirvana is unconditioned; things and nothings are conditioned.

14. */ji ltar mya ngan 'das pa la//dngos dang dngos med gnyis yod de//de gnyis gcig la yod min te//snang ba dang ni mun pa bzhin/*

14. How could nirvana exist as both a thing and nothing? Those two do not exist as one. They are like light and dark.

15. */dngos min dngos po med min pa//mya ngan 'das par gang ston pa//dngos po med dang dngos po dag//grub na de ni grub* par 'gyur/*

15. The presentation of neither a thing nor nothing as nirvana will be established [only] if things and nothings are established.

16. */gal te mya ngan 'das pa ni//dngos min dngos po med min na//dngos min dngos po med min zhes// gang zhig gis ni de mngon byed/*

16. If nirvana is neither a thing nor nothing, by who could “neither a thing nor nothing” be perceived?

17. */bcom ldan mya ngan 'das gyur nas//yod par mi mngon de bzhin du//med do zhe'am gnyis ka dang// gnyis min zhes kyang mi mngon no/*

17. After the Bhagavan has entered nirvana, one cannot perceive [him? it?] as “existing,” likewise as “not existing,” nor can one percieve [him? it?] as “both” or “neither”.

18. */bcom ldan bzhugs par gyur na yang//yod par mi mngon de bzhin du/*

/med do zhe'am gnyis ka dang//gnyis min zhes kyang mi mngon no/

18. Even when the Bhagavan is alive, one cannot perceive [him? it?] as "existing," likewise as "not existing," nor can one percieve [him? it?] as "both" or "neither".

19. */'khor ba mya ngan 'das pa las //khyad par cung zad yod ma yin//mya ngan 'das pa 'khor ba las // khyad par cung zad yod ma yin/*

19. Samsara does not have the slightest distinction from Nirvana. Nirvana does not have the slightest distinction from Samsara.

20. */mya ngan 'das mtha' gang yin pa//de ni 'khor ba'i mtha' yin te//de gnyis khyad par cung zad ni // shin tu phra ba'ang yod ma yin/*

20. Whatever is the end of Nirvana, that is the end of Samsara. There is not even a very subtle slight distinction between the two.

21. */gang 'das phan chad mtha' sogs dang//rtag la sogs par lta ba dag//mya ngan 'das dang phyi mtha' dang//sngon gyi mtha' la brten* pa yin/*

21. Views about who passes beyond, ends etc. and permanence etc. are contingent upon nirvana and later ends and former ends.

22. */dngos po thams cad stong pa la//mtha' yod ci zhig mtha' med ci//mtha' dang mtha' med ci zhig yin// mtha'dang mtha' med min pa* ci/*

22. In the emptiness of all things what ends are there? What non-ends are there? What ends and non-ends are there? What of neither are there?

23. */de nyid ci zhig gzhan ci yin//rtag pa ci zhig mi rtag ci//rtag dang mi rtag gnyis ka ci//gnyis ka min pa ci zhig yin/*

23. Is there this? Is there the other? Is there permanence? Is there impermanence? Is there both permanence and impermanence? Is there neither?

24. */dmigs pa thams cad nyer zhi zhing//spros pa nyer zhi zhi ba ste//*

sangs rgyas kyis ni gang du yang/su la'ang chos 'ga' ma bstan to/*

24. Totally pacifying all referents and totally pacifying fixations is peace. The Buddha nowhere taught any dharma to anyone.

mya ngan las 'das pa brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu lnga pa'o // //

26. Analysis of the Twelve Links of Becoming

(Contingency)

1. */ma rig bsgribs pas yang srid phyi*/ /'du byed rnam pa gsum po dag/ /mngon par 'du byed gang yin pa'i** / /las de dag gis 'gro bar 'gro/*

*[*Lha. **phyir **pa'o]*

1. In order to become again, those obscured by ignorance are moved into destinies by actions which are impelled [by] the three kinds of formative impulses.

2. */'du byed rkyen can rnam par shes/ /'gro ba rnams su 'jug par 'gyur/ /rnam par shes pa zhugs gyur na/ /ming dang gzugs ni chags* par 'gyur/*

*[*Lha. **'chags]*

2. Consciousness conditioned by formative impulses enters into destinies. When consciousness has entered, name and form develop.

3. */ming dang gzugs ni chags* gyur na/ /skye mched drug ni 'byung bar 'gyur/ /skye mched drug la brten nas ni/ /reg pa yang dag 'byung bar 'gyur/*

*[*Lha. **'chags]*

3. When name and form develop, the six senses emerge. In dependence upon the six senses, impact actually occurs.

4. */ming* dang gzugs dang dran byed la/ /brten nas skye ba kho na ste/ /de ltar ming** dang gzugs brten nas/ /rnam par shes pa skye bar 'gyur/*

*[*Ts / Lha. **mig.* Lha. ***mig* - Ts. has *ming]* [Skt. has *caksuh* and *nama* resp.]

4. Just as [it] only arises in dependence on the eye, [visual] form and attention, so consciousness arises in dependence on name and form.

[Tsongkhapa has a rather tortured way of explaining this; he compares the arising of visual consciousness from the dominant, object and immediate conditions (i.e. eye, visual form and attention) with its arising from name (= attention) and form (= eye and visual form). But since he equates *nama* with the latter four *skandhas,* he is forced to imply that *vijnana* arises from *vijnana*, i.e. A is the cause of A. No doubt Tibetans would explain this away by arguing that A is the cause of A+1 etc., but this is not convincing in context. Tsongkhapa seems unaware that nowhere in the early canon does the Buddha include *vijnana* in *nama.* Nagarjuna, however, does seem to follow this early tradition here.]

5*. /mig dang gzugs dang rnam par shes/ /gsum po 'dus pa gang yin pa / /de ni reg pa'o reg de las/ /tshor ba kun tu 'byung bar 'gyur/*

5. The gathering of the three: eye and [visual] form and consciousness, that is "impact." From impact feeling totally arises.

6*. /tshor ba'i rkyen gyis sred pa ste/ /tshor ba'i don du sred par 'gyur/ /sred par gyur na* nye bar len/ / rnam pa bzhi po nyer len 'gyur/*

*[*Lha. **nas]*

6. Due to the condition of feeling, there is craving; one craves for what is felt. When one craves, one clings to the four aspects of clinging [sense objects, views, morals and rules, and views of self].

7*. /nyer len yod na len pa po'i/ /srid pa rab tu* 'byung bar 'gyur/ /gal te nye bar len med na/ /grol bar 'gyur te srid mi 'gyur/*

*[*Lha. **kun tu]*

7. When there is clinging, the becoming of the clinger fully arises. When there is no clinging, one is freed; there is no [more] becoming.

8*. /srid pa de yang phung po lnga/ /srid pa las ni skye bar 'gyur*/ /rga shi dang ni mya ngan dang/ /smre sngags 'don bcas sdug bsngal dang/*

*[*Lha. **'byungs]*

8. Becoming is the five aggregates; from becoming one is born. Aging, death, torment, lamentation, pain,

9. */yid mi bde dang 'khrug pa rnams/ /de dag skye las rab tu 'byung/ /de ltar sdug bsngal phung po ni/ /'ba' zhig pa* 'di 'byung bar 'gyur/*

*[*Lha. **po]*

9. mental unhappiness, anxiety: these vividly emerge from birth. Likewise, the entire mass of anguish emerges.

10. */'khor ba'i rtsa ba 'du byed de/ /de phyir mkhas* rnams 'du mi byed/ /de phyir mi mkhas byed po yin/ / mkhas min** de nyid mthong phyir ro/*

*[*Lha. **khams **pas]*

10. The root of life is formative impulses. Therefore, the wise do not form impulses. Therefore, the unwise are formers, but not the wise since they see reality.

[*mi mkhas* = Skt. *avidvan* = the ignorant]

11. */ma rig 'gags par gyur na ni/ /'du byed rnams* kyang** 'byung mi 'gyur/ /ma rig 'gag par 'gyur ba ni/ /shes pas de nyid bsgoms pas so/*

*[*Lha. **rnam **kun]*

11. When ignorance stops, formative impulses too do not occur. The stopping of ignorance [comes] through practising that with understanding.

12. */de dang de ni 'gags gyur pas/ /de dang de ni mngon mi 'byung/ /sdug bsngal phung po 'ba' zhig pa*/ /de ni de ltar yang dag 'gag**/*

*[*Lha. **po **dgab (corrupt)]*

12. By the stopping of the former, the latter will clearly not occur. The entire mass of anguish will likewise completely stop.

// srid pa'i yan lag bcu gnyis brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu drug pa'o // //

27. Investigation of Views

(*Opinion*)

1. */ 'das dus byung ma byung zhes dang//'jig rten rtag pa la sogs par//lta ba gang yin de dag ni//sngon gyi mtha' la brten pa yin/*

1. Those views such as "I occurred or did not occur in the past," the world is permanent, are dependent on the extreme of before.

2. */ ma 'ongs dus gzhan 'byung 'gyur dang//mi 'byung 'jig rten mtha' sogs par//lta ba gang yin de dag ni//phyi ma'i mtha' la brten pa yin/*

2. Those views such as I will occur or not occur at another time in the future, the world has an end, are dependent on the extreme of Later.

3. */ 'das pa'i dus na byung gyur zhes//bya ba de ni mi 'thad do//sngon tshe rnams su gang byung ba//de nyid 'di ni ma yin no/*

3. It is incorrect to say: "I occurred at a time in the past." Whatever occurred before, that is not this.

4. */ de nyid bdag tu 'gyur snyam na//nye bar len pa tha dad 'gyur//nye bar len pa ma gtogs par//khyod kyi bdag ni gang zhig yin/*

4. If you think that that became me, then that-which-is-clung-to would be something else. What is your self apart from that-which-is-clung-to?

5. */nye bar len pa ma gtogs pa'i//bdag yod ma yin byas pa'i tshe//nye bar len nyid bdag yin na//khyod kyi bdag ni med pa yin/*

5. Were you [to say] that there exists no self apart from that-which-is-clung-to, if the very that-which-is-clung-to were the self, your self would be non-existent.

6. */nye bar len nyid bdag ma yin//de 'byung ba dang 'jig pa yin//nye bar blang ba ji lta bur//nye bar len po yin par 'gyur /*

6. The very that-which-is-clung-to is not the self: it arises and passes away. How can that-

which-has-been-clung-to be the one that clings?

7. */bdag ni nye bar len pa las//gzhan du 'thad pa nyid ma yin//gal te gzhan na len med par//gzung yod rigs na gzung du med/*

7. It is not correct for the self to be other than that-which-is-clung-to. If it were other, with nothing to cling to, then something [i.e. the self] fit to be apprehended would not be apprehended.

8. */de ltar len las gzhan ma yin//de ni nyer len nyid kyang min//bdag ni nye bar len med min//med pa nyid du'ang de ma nges/*

8. In that way, it is not other than that-which-is-clung-to nor is it that-which-is-clung-to. The self is not not that-which-is-clung-to, nor can it be ascertained as nothing.

9. */'das pa'i dus na ma byung zhes//bya ba de yang mi 'thad do//sngon tshe rnams su gang byung ba//de las 'di gzhan ma yin no/*

9. It is incorrect to say: "I did not occur at a time in the past." Whatever occurred before, this is not other than that.

10. */gal te 'di ni gzhan gyur na//de med par yang 'byung bar 'gyur//de bzhin de ni gnas 'gyur zhing//der ma shi bar skye bar 'gyur/*

10. If this were other, it would arise even without that. Likewise, that could remain and be born without dying in that [former life].

11. */chad dang las rnams chud za dang//gzhan gyis byas pa'i las rnams ni//gzhan gyis so sor myong ba dang//de la sogs par thal bar 'gyur/*

11. Cut off and actions wasted, acts committed by others would be experienced by someone else. Such would be the consequences.

12. */ma byung ba las 'byung min te//'di la skyon du thal bar 'gyur//bdag ni byas par 'gyur ba dang//'byung ba'am* rgyu med can du 'gyur/*

[Lha. **ba'ang*]

12. There is no occurence from what has not occured. In that case faults would follow: the self would be something made or even though it occured it would be uncaused.

13. */de ltar bdag byung bdag ma byung//gnyis ka gnyis ka ma yin par//'das la lta ba gang yin pa*//de dag* 'thad pa ma yin no/*

[Lha. **par* ***ni*]

13. Therefore, "the self occured, did not occur, both or neither:" all those views of the past are invalid.

14. */ma 'ongs dus gzhan 'byung 'gyur dang//'byung bar mi 'gyur zhes bya bar//lta ba gang yin de dag ni//'das pa'i dus dang mtshungs pa yin/*

14. "I will occur at another time in the future," "I will not occur:" all those views are similar to [those of] the past.

15. */gal te lha de mi de na//de lta na ni rtag par 'gyur//lha ni ma skyes nyid 'gyur te//rtag la skye ba med phyir ro/*

15. If the divine were human, then there would be something permanent. The divine is utterly unborn, because there is no birth in permanence.

16. */gal te lha las mi gzhan na//de lta na ni mi rtag 'gyur//gal te lha mi gzhan yin na//rgyud ni 'thad par mi 'gyur ro/*

16. If the human were other than the divine, then there would be no permanence. If the divine and the human were different, there could be no continuity [between them].

17. */gal te phyogs gcig lha yin la//phyogs gcig mi ni yin gyur na//rtag dang mi rtag 'gyur ba yin//de yang rigs pa ma yin no/*

17. If one part were divine and one part were human, there would be both permanence and no permanence. But that is not reasonable.

18. */gal te rtag dang mi rtag pa//gnyis ka grub par gyur* na ni//rtag pa ma yin mi rtag min//'grub par 'gyur bar 'dod la rag/*

[Lha. **'gyur*]

18. If both permanence and impermanence were established, you would have to assert non-permanence and non-impermance as established.

19. */gal te gang zhig gang nas gar//'ong zhing gang du'ang 'gro 'gyur na//de phyir 'khor ba thog med par//'gyur na de ni yod ma yin/*

19. If something came from somewhere and went somewhere, then samsara would be without beginning. That is not the case.

20. */gal te rtag pa 'ga' med na//mi rtag gang zhig yin par 'gyur//rtag pa dang ni mi rtag dang//de gnyis bsal bar gyur pa'o/*

20. If there were nothing permanent at all, what thing could be impermanent, permanent and impermanent, free of both?

21. */gal te 'jig rten mtha' yod na//'jig rten pha rol ji ltar 'gyur//gal te 'jig rten mtha' med na//'jig rten pha rol ji ltar 'gyur/*

21. If this world had an end, how would the next world come to be? If this world had no end, how would the next world come to be?

22. */gang phyir phung po rnams kyi rgyun//'di ni mar me'i 'od dang mtshungs//de phyir mtha' yod nyid dang ni//mtha' med nyid kyang mi rigs so/*

22. Because the continuity of the aggregates is similar to the light of a lamp, therefore the very existence or non-existence of an end is unreasonable.

23. */gal te snga ma 'jig 'gyur zhing//phung po 'di la brten byas nas//phung po de ni mi 'byung na//des na 'jig rten mtha' yod 'gyur/*

23. If the former perished and that [future] aggregate did not arise in dependence upon this aggregate, then this world would have an end.

24. */gal te snga ma mi 'jig cing//phung po 'di la brten byas nas//phung po de ni mi 'byung na//des na 'jig rten mtha' med 'gyur/*

24. If the former did not perish and that [future] aggregate did not arise in dependence upon this aggregate, then this world would not have an end.

25. */gal te phyogs gcig mtha' yod la*//phyogs gcig mtha' ni med 'gyur na//'jig rten mtha' yod mtha' med 'gyur//de yang rigs pa ma yin no/*

[Lha. **pa*]

25. If one part had an end and one part did not have an end, the world would be with and without an end. That too is unreasonable.

26. */ji lta bur na nyer len po'i//phyogs gcig rnam par 'jig 'gyur la//phyogs gcig rnam par 'jig mi 'gyur//de ltar de ni mi rigs so/*

26. How can one part of the one-who-clings perish while one part does not perish? Likewise, that is unreasonable.

27. */ji lta bur na nyer blang ba*//phyogs gcig rnam par 'jig 'gyur la//phyogs gcig rnam par 'jig mi 'gyur// de ltar de yang mi rigs so/*

[Lha. **ba'i*]

27. How can one part of that-which-is-clung-to perish while one part does not perish? Likewise, that is unreasonable.

28. */gal te mtha' yod mtha' med pa//gnyis ka grub par gyur na ni//mtha' yod ma yin mtha' med min//'grub par 'gyur bar 'dod la rag/*

28. If both the presence and absence of an end were established, you would have to assert non-presence and non-absence as established.

29. */yang na dngos po thams cad dag//stong phyir rtag la sogs lta ba//gang dag gang du gang la ni//ci las kun tu 'byung bar 'gyur/*

29. And because all things are empty, about what and in whom do views such as that of permanence spring forth?

30. */ gang gis thugs rtse nyer bzung nas//lta ba thams cad spang ba'i phyir//dam pa'i chos ni ston mdzad pa//gou tam de la phyag 'tshal/*

30. I bow down to Gautama, whose kindness holds one close, who revealed the sublime dharma in order to let go of all views.

[Ts. recognizes that this verse can be treated as separate from the body of the chapter. He also

cites the *Sa lu ljang pa'i mdo* (*Shalistamba Sutra*), an early Mahayana sutra, as a source for this chapter.]

lta ba brtag pa zhes bya ba ste rab tu byed pa nyi shu bdun pa'o////

[Colophon]

dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba theg pa chen po'i chos mngon pa rnam par gzhag pa / don dam pa'i de kho na yang dag par ston pa / shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i tshul gsal bar byed pa / slob dpon bdag nyid chen po 'phags pa klu sgrub mi 'phrogs pa'i mkhyen rab dang thugs rjer ldan pa / de bzhin gshegs pa'i theg pa bla na med pa'i tshul gsal bar byed pa / rab tu dga' ba'i sa bsgrubs nas / bde ba can gyi zhing du gshegs pa / 'jig rten gyi khams dang ba'i 'od ces bya bar / de bzhin gshegs pa ye shes 'byung gnas 'od ces bya bar 'gyur bas mdzad pa rdzogs so // //

dbang phyug dam pa'i mnga' bdag rgyal po chen po dpal lha btsan po'i bka' lung gis /rgya gar gyi mkhan po chen po dbu ma pa / dzny'a na garbha dang / zhu chen gyi lo tstsha ba dge slong cog ro klu'i rgyal mtshan gyis bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa / 'di la rab tu byed pa nyi shu rtsa bdun / shloo ka bzhi brgya bzhi bcu rtsa dgu yod / bam po ni phyed dang gnyis su byas so / slad kyis kha che'i grong khyer dpe med kyi dbus / gtsug lag khang rin chen sbas pa'i dbus su / kha che'i mkhan po ha su ma ti dang / bod kyi sgra bsgyur gyi lo tstsha ba pa tshab nyi ma grags kyis mi'i bdag po 'phags pa lha'i sku ring la 'grel pa tshig gsal ba dang bstun nas bcos pa'o // //

slad kyis ra sa 'phrul snang gi gtsug lag khang du / rgya gar gyi mkhan po ka na ka dang / lo tstsha ba de nyid kyis zhu chen bgyis pa'o // //

Tsongkhapa on Nagarjuna

A Translation of Selected Passages from Chapters 19 and 24 of Tsongkhapa's *An Ocean of Reason: A Great Exposition of the Root Text* **Verses from the Center (***rTsa she tik chen rigs*

*pa'i rgya mtsho***)**

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April 2000

Preface

This document contains translations of selected passages from chapter 19 (MMK: 19 *An Investigation of Time*) and chapter 24 (MMK: 24 *An Investigation of the Ennobling Truths*) of Tsongkhapa's late fourteenth century text *An Ocean of Reason: A Great Exposition of the Root Text* Verses from the Center (*rTsa she tik chen rigs pa'i rgya mtsho*).

In each chapter, the romanised Tibetan text of Nagarjuna's verses is followed by a literal English translation and then Tsongkhapa's word by word commentary. I have concentrated on the passages in the chapters where Tsongkhapa explicitly interprets the root text. I have omitted digressions, which are indicated by ellipsis points. The pagination follows that of the edition published in Varanasi by the *mTho slob dge ldan spyi las khang* in 1973.

This work was done as part of my preparatory study for the free poetic translation of Nagarjuna's text as found in Stephen Batchelor. *Verses from the Center: A Buddhist Vision of the Sublime*. New York: Riverhead, 2000.

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April 2000

Contents

19. Investigation of Time

(MMK: 19)

Tibetan Text, literal verse translation and Tsongkhapa's commentary in *An Ocean of Reason: A Great Exposition of the Root Text* **Verses from the Center (***rTsa she tik chen rigs pa'i rgya mtsho***)**

1.

/da ltar byung dang ma 'ongs pa//gal te 'das la ltos gyur na//da ltar byung dang ma 'ongs pa//'das pa'i dus ni yod par 'gyur/

If the present and the future

were contingent on the past,

then the present and the future

would have existed in the past.

If both the present and the future were intrinsically existent, one could not pass beyond either of them. Therefore, **if** both **the present and the future were contingent** up**on** a time which is **past**, **then** both **the present and the future would have existed in the past**. Because if those two times were intrinsically existent, then their being contingent upon the past would also have the nature of intrinsic existence, and since such a nature would have to be unambiguously the case [*mi 'khrul*] at all times and places, it could never change into anything else. ... If those two times existed in the past time, then they too would be past, in which case one would be unable to posit a past, because, if the past and future are posited as such due to their being respectively past and future in relation to the present, if there were no present there could be no past either.

2.

/da ltar byung dang ma ‘ongs pa//gal te de ni med gyur na// da ltar byung dang ma ‘ongs pa//ci ltar de la ltos par ‘gyur/

If the present and future

did not exist there,

then how could the present and the future

be contingent on it?

If, having accepted the argument which has just been given, one now thinks that both **the present and the future did not exist** at that past time, **then how could** they **be contingent on** the past? They could not.

3.

/‘das pa la ni ma ltos par//de gnyis grub pa yod ma yin//de phyir da ltar byung ba dang//ma ‘ong dus kyang yod ma yin/

Without being contingent on the past

neither can be established.

Hence the present and the future times

also do not exist.

Following those who believe the past to be permanent, could it be that both [present and future] do not need to be contingent on it? But **without being contingent on the past neither** [of them] **can be established**. This is so, because [of the following reasoning]: (a) were such things as sprouts to have their own self-nature, they would be unable to pass beyond that [condition]; (b) but it is impossible to posit the present without taking into account its being contingent on the

past; (c) and the future too must be indirectly contingent on the past, because it is posited as the future now due to its having not yet occurred. If those two times were not contingent on the past, they would not [have to] be contingent on anything else either. Thus, due to their not being contingent on anything, they would be as non-existent as the horns of a donkey. In this way contingency or non-contingency on the past cannot intrinsically exist. **Hence** both **the present and the future times also do not** intrinsically **exist**. (337-8)

4.

/rim pa'i tshul ni 'di nyid kyis//hlag ma gnyis po bsnor ba dang//mchog dang tha ma 'bring la sogs//gcig la sogs pa'ang shes par bya/

These very stages

Can be applied to the other two.

Superior, inferior, middling etc.,

Singularity and so on can also be understood [thus].

To understand how the past and future's contingency on the present and the past and present's contingency on the future are likewise not intrinsically existent, **the very stages** of reasoning already used to refute the intrinsic existence of the [present and future's] contingency on the past **can be applied to** the arguments on the intrinsic existence of contingency on both **the other two** times of present and future. [Verses 1-3] could then be altered as follows:

If the past and the future

were contingent on the present,...

...Hence the past and the future times

also do not exist.

and

If the past and the present

were contingent on the future,...

...Hence the past and the present times

also do not exist.

These very stages in which the three times have been analysed can lead to an understanding of how all tripartite divisions and relationships can be explained: **superior, inferior** and **middling**; skilful, unskilful and unspecified; arising, abiding and ceasing; inner, outer and central; the three realms [desire, form, formless]; training, beyond training and neither; **singularity**, duality and multiplicity [?]. (338-9)

5.

/mi gnas dus ni 'dzin mi byed//gang zhig gzung bar bya ba'i dus//gnas pa yod pa ma yin pas//ma bzung dus ni ji ltar gdags/

Non-dwelling time cannot be apprehended.

Since time which can be apprehended

Does not exist as something which dwells,

How can one talk of unapprehendable time?

One might argue that time is inherently existent because it is something other than moments, seconds, minutes, day, night and so on. If "time" dwelled as intrinsically different from moments and so on, then although [in theory] it could be apprehended as something distinctive through moments and so on, "time" [as such] could not dwell in its own right as something apprendable through moments and so on. Therefore, since it does **no**t **dwell** in such a way, **time cannot be apprehended** through moments and so on which are intrinsically different from it.

[But it might still be objected:] Permanent time does exist and is evident from moments and so on:

Time brings things to maturity;

Time brings people together;

Time awakens one from sleep;

It is extremely hard to go beyond time.

Why could there not be something with such characteristics? But a **time which can be apprehended** and made evident by moments and so on **does not exist as something which dwells** in its own right, because if it did exist as intrinsically different from moments and so on, it should be able to be known [as such] whereas in fact it cannot. ... Since such time is unknowable through any valid way of knowing, **how can one talk of** that **unapprehendable time** by means of moments and so on? One simply cannot.

6.

/gal te dus ni dngos rten te//dngos med dus ni ga la yod//dngos po 'ga' yang yod min na//dus lta yod par ga la 'gyur/

If time depended on things,

Where would time which is a non-thing exist?

If there were no things at all,

Where would a view of time exist?

Some might say: Although it is indeed true that permanent time does not exist, **time** configured in **depend**ence up**on** conditioned **things** such as forms is what is denoted by the expression "moments and so on." **Where would time which is a non-thing**, i.e. which is intrinsically different from such things as form, **exist**? **If**, since [such time] could not exist, time is posited in dependence upon things such as form, and when, for the reasons already given and explained, **there were no things at all** which inherently exist, **where would a**n inherently existent **view of time** configured on [things] **exist**? It could not exist. (339-40)

24. Investigation of the Ennobling Truths

(MMK: 24)

Tibetan Text, literal translation and Tsongkhapa's commentary in *An Ocean of Reason: A Great Exposition of the Root Text* **Verses from the Center (***rTsa she tik chen rigs pa'i rgya mtsho***)**

1.

/ gal te 'di dag kun stong na//'gyur ba med cing 'jig pa med//'phags pa'i bden pa bzhi po rnams//khyod la med par thal bar 'gyur/

"If all were empty,

Nothing could come about or perish.

It would follow for you

That the four ennobling truths could not exist.

The previous twenty-three chapters have sought to establish through reasoning how all internal and external phenomena lack the nature of intrinsic existence. [There now follows] an objection by those who think that this reasoning, which only sets out to prove whether or not [things are intrinsically existent], denies all actions and fields of action such as arising and passing away, bondage and freedom.

"If it were established that **all** internal and external things **were empty** of intrinsic existence, you would have committed both great and many errors. How? If things were empty in that way, they could not exist. Hence, like children of barren women, they could neither be born nor die. In which case **nothing** at all **could come about or perish.** Since nothing existed, **it would follow for you** proponents of emptiness **that the four ennobling truths could not exist**. For if there were not the slightest birth or destruction, the five aggregates of clinging, which were born from former causes and are the truth of anguish, could not exist. If they did not exist, then the actions and afflictions that are the origin of the anguished aggregates could also not exist. If there were no anguish, a true cessation, by which anguish ceases, could likewise not exist. And if there were no cessation of anguish, the true eightfold path that leads to such cessation could not exist. (395)

2.

/'phags pai' bden pa bzhi med pas//yongs su shes dang spang ba dang//bsgom dang mngon du bya ba dang//'thad par 'gyur ba ma yin no/

"Since the four ennobling truths would not exist,

Understanding, letting go,

Cultivating and realizing

Would no longer be valid.

"If that were the case, **since the four ennobling truths would not exist**, **understanding** anguish, **letting go** of its origins, **cultivating** the path **and realizing** cessation **would no longer be valid**. Because if the four fields of action (that which is to be understood [i.e. anguish], that which is to be let go of [i.e. the origins of anguish] etc.) were non existent, then the four [corresponding] actions (understanding etc.) would also be invalid. For actions always require fields in which to act. (395)

3.

/de dag yod pa ma yin pas//'bras bu bzhi yang yod ma yin//'bras bu med na 'bras gnas med//zhugs pa dag kyang yod ma yin/

"Since they would not exist,

The four fruits would also not exist.

If the fruits did not exist, there could be no abiding in the fruits.

Experiencing them would also not exist.

"Since the understanding of the truth of anguish etc. **would not exist, the four fruits** [i.e. of the stream entrant, once returner, non-returner and arhat, the four classic stages of awakening found in early Buddhist tradition] **would also not exist. ... If th**ose four **fruits did not exist, there could be no** four ennobled beings to **abid**e **in the fruits.** Therefore, there **would also not exist** the four ennobled beings to **experience them**. (395-6)

4.

/gal te skyes bu gang zag brgyad//de dag med na dge 'dun med//'phags pa'i bden rnams med pa'i phyir// dam pa'i chos kyang yod ma yin/

"If those eight beings did not exist,

The Community would not exist.

Since there would be no ennobling truths,

The sublime Dharma could also not exist.

"If those eight beings, i.e. the four who abide in the fruits and the four who experience the fruits, **did not exist, the Community** Jewel **would not exist.** If there were no eight beings, **since there would be no ennobling truths**, **the sublime Dharma** (so-called since it is the Dharma of those ennobled sublime ones) **could also not exist.** [There are two kinds of] Dharma here: Insight, which leads one into the path that results in the fruit of cessation, and Texts, i.e. the teachings which elucidate those [paths and their fruits]. (398)

5.

/chos dang dge 'dun yod min na//sangs rgyas ji ltar yod par 'gyur//de skad stong pa nyid smra na//dkon mchog gsum la gnod pa ni/

"If the Community and the Dharma did not exist,

How could Buddha exist?

When you talk of emptiness,

The three Jewels are maligned.

"If the sublime **Dharma did not exist, how could Buddha exist?** It could not, because apart from experientially knowing all dharmas through the injunctions of the sublime Dharma and Dharma which accords with it, there can be no attainment of Buddhahood. **If the Community did not exist, how could Buddha exist?** There are four reasons for this: for the attainment of Buddhahood it is necessary (1) to have accumulated wisdom from the teachings of the Community and (2) to have accumulated goodness through having made offerings, paid respect and gone for refuge to the Community. (3) If there were no Community, there would be no one who has achieved stream entry etc. And without first experiencing those [stages], one cannot attain Buddhahood, because even the Buddha must inevitably have achieved some of those fruits. (4) Furthermore, Lord Buddha himself pertained to the Community that has no more training to do, and in some schools is regarded as part of the Community of monks. In these ways, it is obvious that there can be no Buddha without Community. ... Therefore, **when you talk of** the meaning of **emptiness**, you **are malign**ing **the three Jewels** of Buddha, Dharma and Community, which are so hard to find, occur only rarely, are not encountered by those with little goodness and are very precious. (398-9)

6.

/byed cing 'bras bu yod pa dang//chos ma yin dang chos yin dang//'jig rten pa yi tha snyad ni//kun la'ang gnod pa byed pa yin/

"The existence of actions and fruits,

What is not Dharma and what is Dharma,

The conventions of the world:

All these too are maligned."

"Furthermore, since you include everything when you talk of all phenomena being empty of intrinsic existence, then the occurrence or non-occurence of the **fruits** of both **what is not Dharma**, i.e. what is unskilful, **and what is Dharma**, i.e. what is skilful, would not exist. And **all the conventions of the world** such as 'do this,' 'sit down,' 'go away,' 'come here,' since they too must be included in 'everything,' **are maligned**. Hence, this manner of teaching emptiness is no good." (399)

7.

/de la bshad pa khyod kyis ni//stong nyid dgos dang stong nyid dang//stong nyid don ni ma rtogs pas//de phyir de ltar gnod pa yin/

An explanation for that: [let me explain:]

Since you do not understand

The need for emptiness, emptiness, and the point of emptiness,

Therefore in that way you malign.

Here is **an explanation** to answer **that** other person's objection: **Since you do not understand the need for** teaching **emptiness**, the nature of **emptiness, and the point of emptiness,** i.e. that point, which when clearly grasped, one then explains as "emptiness," you **therefore** badly malign yourself, i.e. you are damaged by numerous wrong ideas. Entirely because of your own

misconceptions, you think that “non-inherent existence” ... means “non-existence.” **In that way**, in falsely exaggerating the meaning of emptiness, you then censure us with statements such as:

“If all were empty,

Nothing could come about or perish...” [v. 1 above]

and thus, with great displeasure, **you malign** us.

Likewise, if you were to interpret the earlier line:

“Fixations are stopped by emptiness.” [XVIII: 5]

to imply that emptiness means the pacification of every single fixation which apprehends the characteristics of something, and therefore “non-inherent existence” means “non-existence,” then the web of fixations alone will expand in such a way that you will fail to understand the need for teaching emptiness. ...

Moreover, it says in a sutra: “Whatever is born from conditions is unborn.” That is why something that depends on conditions is said to be empty: it is not self-sufficiently stuck inside of itself. “Contingently emergent” means “intrinsically empty.” “Emptiness” does *not* mean “the absence of a functioning reality.” ... (400-1)

8.

/sangs rgyas rnams kyis chos bstan pa//bden pa gnyis la yang dag rten//’jig rten kun rdzob bden pa dang// dam pa’i don gyi bden pa’o/

The Dharma taught by Buddhas

Perfectly relies on two truths:

The ambiguous truths of the world

And the truths of the sublime meaning.

Who are these people who censure us without understanding the need for emptiness as

explained by the Madhyamika? Failing to correctly understand the division of the two truths, which is explained in the teachings, they are those who argue on the basis of their own enthusiastic opinions while merely mouthing the words of the teachings. Therefore, in order to dispel the misconceptions of those who misconstrue the meaning of the teachings, Acharya [Nagarjuna continues his response] from the point of view of a correct presentation of the two truths.

One enters **the Dharma taught by** the Lord **Buddhas** through **perfectly rel**ying **on two truths**. The two truths are taught as: **the ambiguous truths of the world and the truths of the sublime meaning**.

Here "world" refers to people configured in dependence upon the aggregates [of body and mind], because it is taught that "world" [*'jig rten*] depends [*brten*] on aggregates that perish [*'jig*]. "Ambiguous" [*kun rdzob; samvrti*] means "unaware" or "ignorant," because [ambiguous truths] cover and obscure the actual reality of things. Although in this context "ambiguous" is explained as synonymous with "obscuring," this does not mean that everything ambiguous is obscuring.

Moreover, "ambiguous" can also mean "mutually dependent." Since [things are] necessarily mutually dependent, this means that they do not have the nature of being self-sufficiently stuck inside themselves. This etymology might lead one to conclude that since sublime truths are also like this, they too should be called "ambiguous." This is incorrect. For example, ["lotus" in Tibetan] literally means "lake born." But on the grounds of this etymology one cannot conclude that a frog [is a lotus because it too is "lake born"].

Furthermore, "ambiguity" also implies "signs," i.e. the conventions of the world.

... When [something is] both meaningful and sublime, then it is a "sublime meaning" (*don dam; paramartha*). Since it is infallible in terms of one's seeing reality as it is, it is "truth." [402-3]

[At this point in his commentary, Tsongkhapa launches into a twenty page study of the two truths.]

9.

/gang dag bden pa de gnyis kyi//rnam dbye rnam par mi shes pa//de dag sangs rgyas bstan pa ni//zab mo'i de nyid rnam mi shes/

Those who do not understand

The division into two truths,

Cannot understand

The profound reality of the Buddha's teaching.

Those who do not understand as explained above **the division into** the **two truths** of ambiguous and sublime**, cannot understand the profound**, contingently emergent **reality of the Buddha's teaching.** Therefore, if one wishes to know the reality of the Conqueror's teaching, one should understand how the sublime is beyond the extreme of intrinsic existence as well as the extreme of utter non-existence, for the very reason that contingently created and contingently configured ambiguous [truths] are perfectly functional even while appearing like the moon in water. [423]

10.

/tha snyad la ni ma brten par//dam pa'i don ni bstan mi nus//dam pa'i don ni ma rtogs par//mya ngan 'das pa thob mi 'gyur/

Without relying on conventions

The sublime meaning cannot be taught.

Without understanding the sublime meaning,

One will not attain nirvana.

"The sublime is by nature free from fixations. Nonetheless, it has to be taught. But what is the point of teaching ambiguous [truths] such as the aggregates, the sense fields, the [ennobling] truths, contingent emergence and so on? Since they are not reality itself, then one must let go of them. There is surely no need to teach what is to be let go of?" It is indeed true that deceptive ambiguous [truths], which appear to be reality when in fact they are not, are to be let go of. But **without relying on** and coming to terms with ambiguous truths and **conventions** (i.e. the world's distinctions between speech and what is spoken about, knowledge and what is known etc.) in reference to the noble sublime, **the sublime meaning cannot be taught**. Without being taught, it cannot be understood. And **without understanding the sublime meaning, one will**

not attain nirvana. Therefore, because they are a means for attaining freedom, then like one in search of water needs a cup, one must first invariably come to terms with the ways in which ambiguous things exist.

11.

/stong pa nyid la blta nyes na//shes rab chung rnams phung par byed//ci ltar sbrul la bzung nyes dang// rigs sngags nyes par bsgrub pa bzhin/

If their view of emptiness is wrong,

Those of little intelligence will be hurt.

Like handling a snake in the wrong way,

Or casting a spell in the wrong way.

Those who regard conditioned things as empty of an inherent nature but who ignore the distinction between the two truths will either think that conditioned things do not exist or, having concluded that certain emptinesses are truly existent, that things inherently exist on the basis of [such emptinesses]. **If their view of emptiness is wrong** in either of those ways, **those of little intelligence** in their views **will be hurt**. The way they will be hurt is as follows. One might think that in seeing things to be empty of an inherent nature one will realize there to be no grounds for positing functionality and therefore that nothing exists. This will lead to the wrong view of underestimation [*skur 'debs*]. ... If, on the other hand, one does not underestimate things, but wonders: "How can these things be empty of inherent existence when they appear [as vividly] as they do? The absence of inherent nature cannot be what emptiness means," then one certainly will have rejected emptiness. ...

"If one handles something which is beneficial in a way other [than one should], then it will indeed be of no benefit but how will it cause harm? A person who plants seeds in the wrong way will not be destroyed by his action." Let's consider other examples. **Like**, i.e. for example, if you handle **snake**s, spells or medicines in a way other than you are instructed, not only will this be an error but the potency of these things could cause great harm. If you cast aside such advice and **handl**e them **in the wrong way,** they will damage you. **Or**, similarly, although a spell cast in accordance with instructions will benefit the person who casts it, if you ignore the instructions and **cast a spell in the wrong way**, you will be damaged. [424-5]

12.

/de phyir zhan pas chos 'di yi//gting rtogs dka' bar mkhyen gyur nas//thub pa'i thugs ni chos bstan las// rab tu log par gyur pa yin/

Therefore, knowing how difficult it is

For the weak to understand the depths of this Dharma,

The heart of the Muni

Strongly turned away from teaching the Dharma.

If one regards emptiness in the wrong way, you will be damaged. And those of weak intelligence are incapable of correctly apprehending the meaning of reality itself. On awakening the Buddha saw the temperaments of beings as well as the great depths of the Dharma. **Therefore, knowing how difficult it is for the weak** in intelligence **to understand the depths of this Dharma** of profound contingent emergence, **the heart of the** Lord **Muni strongly turned away from teaching the Dharma**. [425]

13.

/skyon du thal bar 'gyur ba ni//stong la 'thad pa ma yin pas//khyod ni stong nyid spong byed pa//gang de nga la mi 'thad do//

Since [those] erroneous consequences

Do not apply to emptiness,

Whatever rejections you make of emptiness

Do not apply to me.

Not knowing the correct nature of the two truths, you fabricate many **erroneous consequences**, such as:

> "If all were empty,
>
> Nothing could come about or perish..." (XXIV: 1 a-b)

Since you do not understand the presentation of the two truths, you have not internalized emptiness, its point or its need. And this has led you to such fabrications, which **do not apply to** those of us who speak of **emptiness**. Therefore, having ascribed many faults to emptiness, **whatever rejections you make of emptiness do not apply to m**y tradition. You ascribe these faults through exaggerating the meaning of emptiness to mean that there are no functional things at all. But we do not accept that view. Since we explain the meaning of emptiness to be that of the contingent and relational emergence [of things], such criticisms are unjustified. This argument against the Madhyamika tradition (that nothing at all would be able to function) is due to the fact that you fail to understand the meaning of empty contingent emergence. You should try and understand it. [426]

14.

/gang la stong pa nyid rung ba//de la thams cad rung bar 'gyur//gang la stong nyid mi rung ba//de la thams cad mi rung 'gyur/

Those for whom emptiness is possible,

For them everything is possible.

Those for whom emptiness is not possible,

For them everything is not possible.

From our point of view, not only do such mistakes not apply, but all the presentations of the [ennobling] truths and so on work extremely well. **Those** traditions **for whom emptiness** of inherent existence of all things **is possible**, **for them everything** we have spoken of **is possible**.

When we speak of emptiness, we mean that whatever arises contingently and relationally is empty of inherent existence. Therefore, when emptiness is possible, contingent relatedness is possible. [In a world of] contingent and relational emergence, anguish can occur; but [in a world of] no contingent and relational emergence, anguish would not be possible. When there is anguish, the origins of anguish, the cessation of anguish and a path leading to the cessation of anguish are possible. When there are such things, understanding, [letting go of, realizing and cultivating] them are possible, and if we can do those four things, the fruits and those who abide in them are possible. If there are people who experience and abide in the fruits, Community is possible; if the [ennobling] truths exist, the sublime Dharma is possible; and if those two exist, then Buddha is possible. Therefore, the Three Jewels are possible. All mundane and supramundane things, Dharma and not-Dharma, the results of such, and the conventions of the world too are all possible. ...

Those traditions **for whom** the **emptiness** of inherent existence **is not possible**, **for them**, since contingent relatedness is not possible, **everything** we have presented [above] **is not possible**. The way in which this is not possible will be explained at length. [427-8]

15.

/khyod ni rang gi skyon rnams ni//nga la yongs su sgyur byed pa//rta la mngon par zhon bzhin du//rta nyid brjed par gyur pa bzhin/

You are transferring your own mistakes

Onto me.

This is like mounting a horse

But forgetting about the horse itself.

From our point of view, we are without fault and do not contradict any statements about samsara or nirvana, but you misrepresent our viewpoint in a crude and mistaken way. **You** fools who do not see the difference between value and error **are transferring your own mistakes onto me**. **This is like**, for example, someone **mounting a horse but forgetting about the horse itself**. And then accusing someone else of the fault of having stolen the horse. While mounting the horse which has the characteristics of contingent emergence empty of inherent existence, your mind gets distracted and you fail to notice this. Then you get into an argument with us. [428]

16.

/gal te dgnos rnams rang bzhin las//yod par rjes su lta byed na//de lta yin na dngos po rnams//rgyu rkyen med par khyod lta'o/

If you view all things

As existing from their own nature,

Then you would view

All things as not having causes and conditions.

What mistakes are made by those who criticise us who speak only in terms of non-referential emptiness? This is now pointed out. **If you view all things as existing from**, i.e. by, **their own nature**, **then**, since a nature cannot be produced from causes and conditions, **you would view all things as not having** to depend on **causes and conditions**.

17.

/'bras bu dang ni rgyu nyid dang//byed pa po dang byed dang bya//kye ba dang ni 'gag pa dang//'bras bu la yang gnod pa byed/

Cause and effect itself,

Agents, tools and acts,

Production and cessation,

The effects too would be undermined.

If you think of a jug as existing by its own nature, it would have no need of changing **cause**s **and** conditions. It would absurdly follow that the **effect** called "jug" would be causeless. If there were no jugs, then **agents**, i.e. potters, as well as **tools**, such as wheels and so on, **and** the **acts** of making pots would also not exist. Since they were non-existent, **production and cessation** too would not exist, and hence **the effects too would be undermined**. (428)

18.

/rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba gang//de ni stong pa nyid du bshad//de ni brten nas gdags pa ste//de nyid dbu ma'i lam yin no/

Whatever is contingently related

That is explained as emptiness.

That is contingently configured;

It is the central path.

From our standpoint, the reason we are able to validate all presentations is because we accept the following: **whatever is contingently related** to causes and conditions **is explained as** the very meaning of being **empt**y of birth by its own nature.

... But what does it actually mean to say that something empty of inherent existence is something contingently emergent? If it is meant in the sense that a jug is a vessel [with the ability to pour water,] then it would follow that as soon as you are certain that effects emerge in dependence upon causes and conditions you would also be certain of their emptiness. But this is clearly not so. And the same problem occurs if one asserts that the word "contingent emergence" denotes emptiness. Even if you assert that [something's emptiness] is *implicitly* [understood] through the *explicit* certainty of its contingent emergence, this would likewise not hold true. Because if you were to ask yourself: "What is this thing?" you would not [necessarily] say it was [empty].

So how do we deal with this? The way in which something empty is contingently emergent is only accessed by those centred people (Madhyamikas) who have refuted inherent existence through authoritative understanding. And not by anyone else. When such centred people have explicit certainty that something emerges contingently in dependence upon causes, then, through the force of that very cognition, they gain certainty about its emptiness of inherent existence. This is so because they have understood (a) that something inherently existent cannot be related to anything else, and (b) that to be both [inherently existent] and contingently emergent is a contradiction. Having gained certainty about emptiness (the elimination of inherent existence by means of contingent emergence), the very moment they see or hear or remember that grains of barley, sprouts and so on depend upon causes and conditions, then they reflect and meditate on how such things do not therefore have their own nature.

By acting thus, even if, in subsequent lifetimes, the emptiness of inherent existence is not explicitly explained to them, simply through an account of contingent emergence, their predisposition to the view of emptiness will be aroused. This would be like when rTa-thul simply told Kuntu-rgyu-nye-rgyal about the contingent emergence of the four truths, the latter understood the nature of reality itself.

That which is empty of inherent existence **is contingently configured**. We configure a cart on the basis of its wheels and other contingent parts. As such it is empty and not born from its own nature. Such unborn emptiness is beyond the extremes of being and non-being. Thus **it is** both the centre itself and **the central path**. Emptiness is the track on which the centred person moves. Nagarjuna says in his *Polemic*:

> I honour the incomparable Buddha,
>
> Who teaches that
>
> Emptiness, contingent emergence and the central path
>
> Are one.

(429-31)

19.

/gang phyir rten 'byung ma yin pa'i//chos 'ga'ng yod pa ma yin pa/ de phyir stong pa ma yin pa'i// chos 'ga'ng yod pa ma yin no/

Because there are no things at all,

Which are not contingently emergent,

Therefore, there are no things at all,

Which are not empty.

Because there are no things at all, which are not contingently and relationally **emergent**, contingent emergence too is empty of inherent existence. **Therefore, there are no things at all, which are not empty** of inherent existence. (431)

20.

/gal te 'di kun mi stong na//'byung ba med cing 'jig pa med//'phags pa'i bden pa bzhi po rnams//khyod la med par thal bar 'gyur/ (cf v.1)

If all were not empty,

Nothing could come about or perish.

It would follow for you

That the four ennobling truths could not exist.

If all internal and external things **were not empty** of inherent existence, **nothing could come**

about, be born, **or perish**. Then **it would follow for you that the four ennobling truths could not exist**. [431]

21.

/rten cing 'byung ba ma yin na//sdug bsngal yod par ga la 'gyur//mi rtag sdug bsngal gsungs pa de//rang bzhin nyid la yod ma yin/

If things were not contingently emergent,

How could anguish exist?

Impermanent things are taught to be anguish;

In their very own nature they do not exist.

Why is this so? Whatever is inherently existent cannot be contingently emergent. And **if things were not contingently emergent**, they could not be impermanent; they would be like flowers in the sky. Therefore, **how could anguish exist**? For the Lord has said that whatever is impermanent is [prone to]anguish. **Impermanen**t, corrupted **things are taught to be** [prone to] **anguish.** If one accepted that things existed **in**, i.e. by **their very own nature**, then since **they** could **not exist**, anguish could not be possible. [432]

22.

/rang bzhin las ni yod min na//ci zhig kun tu 'byung bar 'gyur//de phyir stong nyid gnod byed la//kun 'byung yod pa ma yin no/* [* error?]

If it did exist from its own nature,

Why would it have an origin?

Therefore, for those who undermine emptiness

It can have no origin.

If anguish **did exist from its own nature**, then since it would be unborn, **why would it have an origin?** It would not need one. **Therefore, for those who undermine** anguish's **emptiness** of inherent existence, **it can have no origin**. Because something is posited as [anguish's] origin due to the fact that anguish originates from it.

23.

/sdug bsngal rang bzhin gyis yod la//'gog pa yod pa ma yin no//rang bzhin nyid ni yongs gnas phyir//'gag la'ang gnod pa byed pa yin/

If anguish existed by its own nature,

There could be no cessation.

Because its own nature would be totally present,

Cessation too would be undermined.

If anguish existed by its own nature, **there could be no** truth of the **cessation** of anguish, because such a nature could never be revoked. **Because** if something existed in that way by **its own nature**, it **would** have to **be totally present** at all times, the truth of the **cessation** of anguish **would be undermined** by those who hold on to inherent existence and reject the view of emptiness.

24.

/lam la rang bzhin yod na ni//bsgom pa 'thad par mi 'gyur te//ci ste lam de bsgom byas na//khyod kyi

rang bzhin yod ma yin/

If the path existed by its own nature,

Cultivation would not be appropriate.

If the path is to be cultivated,

Your own nature cannot exist.

If the truth of **the path existed by its own nature**, since it would exist even it one had not cultivated it, **cultivation would not be appropriate**. What then would be the point of cultivating it? **If** you accept that **the path is to be cultivated**, then **your** ennobling path **cannot exist** by its **own nature**, because it is a task to be performed.

25.

/gang tshe sdug bsngal kun 'byung dang//'gog pa yod pa ma yin na//lam gyis sdug bsngal 'gog pa ni// gang zhig 'thob par 'gyur bar 'dod/

When anguish, origins,

And cessation cannot exist,

What ceasing of anguish

Could one seek to attain by the path?

Surely the path is to be cultivated because the cessation of anguish is to be attained and its origins are to be let go of. But **when**, according to those who maintain that things inherently exist, the aggregates of **anguish**, the truths of the **origins and** the **cessation** of anguish **cannot exist, what** true **ceasing of anguish by the path** that lets go of the origins [of anguish could there be]**?**. Since there can be no cessation which they **seek to attain,** the cultivation of the path would be invalid. [433]

26.

/gal te rang bzhin nyid kyis ni//yongs su shes pa ma yin na//de ni ci ltar yongs shes ‘gyur//rang bzhin gnas pa ma yin nam/

If non-understanding

Existed by its very own nature,

How could one ever understand?

Doesn’t it abides by nature?

If one’s previous **non-understanding** of anguish **existed by its very own nature, how could one** subsequently **ever understand** it? One could not, because **it** truly **abides by** its own **nature**, just like heat in fire, **doesn’t it?** Existing by its own nature and becoming something else are mutually exclusive.

27.

/de bzhin du ni khyod nyid kyi//spang dang mngon du bya ba dang//bsgom dang ‘bras bu bzhi dag kyang// yongs shes bzhin du mi rung ngo/

In the same way, your letting go,

Realizing, cultivating,

And the four fruits too

Are as impossible as understanding.

In the same way as understanding is impossible, from **your** standpoint, **letting go** of origins, **realizing** cessation and **cultivating** the path would also be impossible, because the previous inherently existent state of not-having let go of orgins could not subsequently be let go of. This is so since inherent existence cannot be revoked. The way we have explained understanding can then be applied to the other two [realizing cessation and cultivating the path]. And **as** with **understanding**, **the four fruits** such as stream entry and so on **too** could not possibly exist in a subsequent time while not having existed previously.

28.

/rang bzhin yongs su 'dzin pa yi//'bras bu rang bzhin nyid kyis ni//'thob pa min pa gang yin de//ci ltar 'thob pa nyid du 'gyur/

How can any fruits,

Which totally hold their own nature

and by their own nature are unattained,

Be attained?

How can any of the four **fruits**, **which** exist **by their own nature** as previously **unattained**, subsequently be able to **be attained?** They could not be because they **totally hold their own nature**, i.e. their own nature could never be revoked.

29.

/ 'bras bu med na 'bras gnas med//zhugs pa dag kyang yod ma yin//gal te skyes bu gang zag brgyad//de dag med na dge 'dun med/ [cf. 3c-d / 4a-b]

If the fruits did not exist, there could be no abiding in the fruits.

Experiencing them would also not exist.

If those eight beings did not exist,

The Community would not exist.

If the four fruits and their attainment **did not exist**, **there could be no abiding in the fruits** and therefore **experiencing them also would not exist**. **If those eight beings did not exist, the Community** Jewel **would not exist**.

30.

/'phags pa'i bden rnams med pa'i phyir//dam pa'i chos kyang yod ma yin//chos dang dge 'dun yod min na//sangs rgyas ci ltar yod par 'gyur/ [cf. 4c-d / 5a-b]

Since there would be no ennobling truths,

The sublime Dharma could also not exist.

If the Community and the Dharma did not exist,

How could Buddha exist?

Since there would be no ennobling truths, the sublime Dharma Jewel **could also not exist. If the Community and the Dharma did not exist, how could Buddha exist?** It could not. These points should be understood as explained above.

31.

/khyod kyi sangs rgyas byang chub la//ma brten par yang thal bar 'gyur//khyod kyi byang chub sangs rgyas la//ma brten par yang thal bar 'gyur/ [*Lalungpa*: kyis;* Tsongkhapa*: kyi]*

It would also follow

That your Buddha does not depend on awakening.

It would also follow

That your awakening does not depend on Buddha.

If, for **you**, those who are called **Buddha** existed by their own nature, they would **not depend on**, i.e. be related to, **awakening**, i.e. omnisicient wisdom, because it is said that "natures are unconstructed and unrelated to anything else." Similarly, **it would also follow that your** omniscient wisdom of **awakening does not depend on**, i.e. is unrelated to and independent of, **Buddha**, because it would be inherently existent.

32.

/khyod kyi rang bzhin nyid kyis ni//sangs rgyas min pa gang yin des//byang chub spyod la byang chub phyir//bstsal yang byang chub 'thob mi 'gyur/

For you, someone who by his very nature

Is not Buddha

Could not attain awakening however much he strove

In the practice of awakening for the sake of awakening.

Furthermore, **for you**, a person **who** prior to becoming Buddha abided **by his very nature** in the state of **not-Buddha could not attain awakening however much he strove in the practice of** the Bodhisattva **for the sake of** attaining unsurpassable **awakening**. Because such a nature could never be revoked.

[nb. Tsongkhapa's insistent but strained Mahayana gloss on the text of 31-2]

33.

/'ga' yang chos dang chos min pa//nam yang byed par mi 'gyur te//mi stong ba la ci zhig bya//rang bzhin la ni bya ba med/

No one would ever do

What is Dharma and what is not Dharma.

What can that which is not empty do?

Inherent nature is inactive.

Moreover, if you accept [that things are] inherently existent, **no** person **would ever do** skilful deeds which are **Dharma and** unskilful deeds that are **not Dharma**, because **what can that which is not empty** of inherent nature **do**? It is impossible for something with **inherent nature** to do anything.

34.

/chos dang chos min med par yang//'bras bu khyod la yod par 'gyur//chos dang chos min rgyus byung ba'i//'bras bu khyod la yod ma yin/

Even without Dharma and not-Dharma,

You would have the fruits.

You would not have the fruits

Which have arisen from the causes of Dharma and not-Dharma.

Furthermore, if you say that fruits exist by their own nature, then **even without** having done **Dharm**[ic] **and not-Dharm**[ic acts], **you would have the** pleasant and unpleasant **fruits** which have those [acts] as their cause. In that case, it would be meaningless to do either of those two acts for the sake of those fruits. Hence, without having done those two acts, **you would not have the fruits which have arisen from the causes of Dharma and not-Dharma.**

35.

/chos dang chos min rgyus byung ba'i/''bras bu gal te khyod la yod//chos dang chos min las 'byung ba'i//'bras bu ci phyir stong ma yin/

If you have the fruits

Which have arisen from the causes of Dharma and not-Dharma,

Why are the fruits which have arisen from the Dharma and not-Dharma

Not empty?

If you have the two **fruits which have arisen from the causes of Dharma and not-Dharma**, **why are** both **the fruits not empty** of inherent existence? They must be because they are contingently emergent [things] **which have arisen from the Dharma and not-Dharma**, like reflections in a mirror.

36.

/rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba yi//stong pa nyid la gnod byed gang//'jig rten pa yi tha snyad ni//kun la'ang gnod pa byed pa yin/

Whoever undermines emptiness

Which is contingent emergence

Also undermines

All the conventions of the world.

He who says that things are inherently existent **undermines emptiness which is contingent emergence**. **Whoever** does that **undermines all the conventions of the world** such as "go!", "do!", "give it back!", "sit down!"

37.

/stong pa nyid la gnod byed na//bya ba ci yang med 'gyur zhing/rtsom pa med pa'i bya bar 'gyur//mi byed pa yang byed por 'gyur/

If one undermines emptiness,

There would be no actions at all

And actions without an author

And agents who do not act.

Moreover, **if one undermines** the **emptiness** of inherent existence of all things, then since something inherently existent would exist without having to do anything [to produce it], people **would** do **no actions at all**. There would be **actions without an author**, i.e. [actions occuring] even without anything being done, **and agents who do not act** at all. Since this is illogical, all things must be empty of inherent existence.

38.

/rang bzhin yod na 'gro ba rnams//ma skyes pa dang ma 'gags dang//ther zug tu ni gnas 'gyur zhing// gnas skabs sna tshogs bral bar 'gyur/

If there were inherent nature,

All beings would be unborn and unceasing,

Would be fixed in place forever,

Separated from the variety of situations.

Furthermore, **if** all things existed by their **inherent nature, all beings would be unborn and unceasing**, because an inherent nature would be unconstructed and irrevocable. If things were unborn and unceasing, all beings **would be fixed in place forever** and since they would be unrelated to causes and conditions, they would be **separated from** all **the variety of situations**.

39.

/gal te stong pa yod min na//ma thob 'thob par bya ba dang//sdug bsngal mthar byed las dang ni//nyon mongs thams cad spong ba'ang med/

If [things] were not empty,

There could be no attainment of what had not been attained,

No ending of anguish

And no letting go of all actions and afflictions.

If [things] were not empty of inherent existence, **there could be no** subsequent **attainment of** a fruit that **had not** previously **been attained**, **no** subsequent **ending** and exhaustion **of anguish** that previously had not been ended and exhausted, **and no** subsequent **letting go of all actions and afflictions** that had not previously been let go of.

40.

/gang gis rten cing 'brel par 'byung//mthong ba des ni sdug bsngal dang//kun 'byung dang ni 'gog pa dang//lam nyid de dag mthong ba yin/

He who sees contingent emergence

Sees anguish

And origins and cessation

And the path itself.

If one believes that things are inherently existent, all doctrines will be invalidated. Therefore, the yogin **who sees** emptiness to have the characteristics of **contingent emergence sees** the very reality of those four truths of **anguish and origins and cessation and the path**.

Translated from Tibetan by Stephen Batchelor

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